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MISS MONKTON'S MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE TAILOR'S SON.

THE glances bestowed by the two young men on each other were anything but friendly. Crosby got up, bowed stiffly to Humphrey, and stood with his arms folded and his head slightly bent. Humphrey stared, frowned, took the nearest chair, and sat fiddling his boots with his riding-whip. He looked a fine broad-shouldered fellow, with a ruddy healthy colour from his ride in the cold. His first greeting of Sir George had been rather eager, with a sort of cordial respect in it; but a cloud immediately came over his face at the confused air of the two men who received him; for Sir George felt himself in a false position, and in consequence of this his manner was both awkward and dry. There was a minute of total silence.

'You did me the honour of saying that I might call on you to-day,' said Humphrey at last.

'I did,' answered Sir George. Humphrey looked at him, and then at Crosby, with rising anger. What did Sir George mean by letting that insolent ass of an aide-de-camp stay in the room at

such an interview as this, when he was to have Letitia's answer? Well, whatever it meant, he could soon have his revenge.

'Should I offend you, sir,' he said, 'by asking for a few minutes of private conversation? We shall discuss our business better without a third person—if Captain Crosby will pardon the remark.'

As he spoke he gave Crosby a look which was quite insulting in its haughty dialike.

'Mr. Humphrey Barrett is under a slight mistake,' said Crosby quietly, though his eyes flashed. 'Would it not be best, sir, that he should know the whole truth?'

'No quarrelling, gentlemen,' said Sir George, 'or I shall know how to settle the affair at once, without regard to either of you. Now we had better talk this over in a friendly spirit. Since I saw you yesterday, Mr. Barrett, I have made a discovery—not altogether a pleasant one to you or to me. You have done me the honour to make proposals for my daughter. I have to tell you that she does not receive them very favourably; and I find that the reason of this is an attachment between her and Captain Crosby.'

'An acquaintance of three days!' said Humphrey, colouring crimson, with an attempt at a smile. 'Let me offer my congratulations, Sir George. Your son-in-law would be an ornament to any family. Pity his own is not more worthy of him—and of such a marriage.'

'Sir!' exclaimed Crosby, with a sudden step forward.

Humphrey got up, and turned towards the door. He was smiling more, while Crosby looked furious.

'You will answer this insult to me,' said the young officer.

'By no means,' said Humphrey. 'I only fight with gentlemen.'

Sir George listened to this outburst with consternation in his face.

Just then there was a little noise in the hall outside.

'I will, then. You may come too if you like,' said Letitia; and she opened the library-door, and walked in, followed with some hesitation by Mrs. Bushe, flushed and tearful.

Everybody was silent when she came in. Crosby's face softened; Humphrey's smile died away, and a look of deep anger and disappointment succeeded it. Sir George came forward, took his daughter's hand, and held it with unusual kindness of manner.

'Are these gentlemen quarrelling, papa?' said Letitia, looking round with her bright blue eyes.

'Do you think yourself a small treasure, to be given up without a word?' said Humphrey, with such fierce meaning in his eyes as they met hers that she was obliged to look away. The shrinking dislike, so evident in her manner, brought a sudden look of rage into his face.

Then Captain Crosby came forward gravely, and said,

'In the presence of these ladies,

sir, will you be good enough to explain your words just now?'

'What is all this?' said Letitia, again speaking to her father.

'Mr. Barrett has implied that Captain Crosby is not by birth a gentleman,' replied Sir George very dryly. 'I myself should be glad to know what he means—Crosby knows why. These things should be clear and above board. I hate mysteries.'

'But you told me yourself that he was a gentleman. And certainly no one need ask,' said Letitia, in her clear voice.

Crosby bowed his thanks.

'I had every reason to think so; but there seems some difficulty in the way of his giving an account of himself,' said Sir George.

'Why don't you tell papa all about it?' said Letitia. 'I—we all want to know—and then she blushed and stopped suddenly.

'Can I ask you to trust me so far as to remain in ignorance of my true birth a little longer, without any change in your opinion of me?' said Crosby, looking at her earnestly.

'As long as you please,' answered Letitia. 'Say so too, papa. He has some good reason.'

'There you are right, Miss Monkton. He has a very good reason,' said Humphrey.

'Then pray tell us what it is,' said Letitia, quite ready in her lover's defence to look him fearlessly in the face.

'Yes; for Heaven's sake let us know what you mean!' said Crosby.

His proud bearing as he stood there not far from Letitia would not have suggested that he had anything to be ashamed of. Mrs. Bushe, who had been feeling very anxious, saw it with pleasure, and remembered the mysterious things he had said the day before. Perhaps he was a prince in disguise

—but who? On the whole, for dear Letitia's sake, considering the Royal Marriage Act, she hoped not.

Humphrey Barrett looked slowly round at them all, and the unpleasant smile curled his lips again as he said,

'Well, you bear me witness that I am asked to say what I know. If Captain Crosby had been more courteous I might have kept it to myself; but 'tis the kindest thing, after all, to open Sir George's eyes. He may brave it out as he likes, standing there, but I have it on good authority. His father lives in Cork; he is old Mat Crosby the tailor. Everybody in the south of Ireland knows him well.'

This announcement had its differing effect on the group that stood round. Mrs. Bushe turned pale and caught her breath with a horrified gasp. Sir George frowned, became extremely red, dropped his daughter's hand, and turned to look at Crosby. Letitia began to laugh. As for Crosby, a sort of spasm passed over his face; what it meant nobody could say for certain, but to Sir George it was as good as a confession. Especially as, after one glance at Letitia, he made no attempt to contradict Humphrey, but stood grave and silent, as if waiting for somebody else to speak. Humphrey's face slowly brightened and became triumphant, as Sir George's darkened more and more.

'If this is believed,' he said to Crosby, 'you have only yourself to thank for it. Your authority, Mr. Barrett?'

'A man who was his servant till lately—Roger Vance.'

'The fellow he turned off,' said Sir George. 'There is something queer about this affair altogether. Crosby, I have liked you, as you know. If you will at once tell

us frankly who you are, I will believe your word against Roger Vance's.'

'I thank you, Sir George,' said Crosby, with the faintest smile. 'I have already asked you to trust me. I told you that I could not say anything about my family at present. I can only repeat what I said then.'

'You will not even say that the fellow's story is a lie?'

'I decline to enter any further into the subject.'

Mrs. Bushe sighed. Letitia was listening almost breathlessly. Sir George looked completely puzzled for a moment, and then burst into a rage.

'Then you are the son of this tailor, sir! And for all this time past you have acted a lie, have pushed yourself into the society of gentlemen, have wormed your way into my confidence! Do you suppose I should have made a tailor's son my aide-de-camp, have invited him to my house, and then to be subjected to such unheard-of insolence?'

'I can bear a good deal from you, sir,' said Crosby. 'But if an honest tailor's son has wit enough to pass for a gentleman, I do not see why he should be so heavily handicapped. In the English army the way is open to merit, and you cannot say that I have not done my duty as an officer.'

'It is perfectly impossible!' said Mrs. Bushe, no longer able to contain herself. 'Look at him, Sir George. A tailor's son!'

Crosby's elegance and distinction, as he stood there so calmly in the midst of the storm, were perhaps more likely to influence women than men. But Sir George himself could not look at him without feeling of some sort.

'Come now, Crosby,' he said, 'I hate all this tragical nonsense.'

Tell me in plain words that you are not this tailor's son, and I'll believe you. I will, upon my honour.'

Crosby looked at Sir George for a moment, and then turned towards Letitia.

'What do you wish me to do?' he said. 'I have very urgent reasons for not answering any question whatever about myself at present; still, if I am to lose you by my silence, these reasons must of course give way. I only care for your opinion. Does my being called a tailor's son make any difference to you?'

'Difference, sir!' broke in Sir George. 'It makes this difference, that you will never see or speak to my daughter again. Leave the room, Letitia.'

'Directly, papa,' said Letitia. She was quite pale, but she looked so resolute, as she walked across to where Crosby was standing, that nobody moved a finger to stop her. She stood still before him, and put both her hands into his.

'Don't answer any questions for me,' she said. 'I do not care who your father is. It will never make the smallest difference to me.'

For a minute there was a dead silence. Crosby looked down into the true sweet eyes that were raised to his, and very gently and reverently kissed her hand. Then Letitia walked out of the room, and Mrs. Bushe followed her.

'You will oblige me, Captain Crosby,' said Sir George, in his driest and coldest manner, 'by leaving this house at your earliest convenience, and by keeping up no sort of communication with me or any member of my family.'

Crosby bowed, and left the room without making any answer.

Then Sir George went up to Humphrey Barrett, who had been watching this scene with a mixture of rage and satisfaction, and shook him very kindly by the hand.

'These family troubles are awkward things,' he said. 'Come and see us again soon. I hope your next visit will be a pleasanter one.'

'Is there any hope of that, sir?' said Humphrey, in a downcast way.

'Of course. I shall settle that for you. I am master in my own family,' said Sir George.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WEDDING-GOWN.

THE following days were days of great unhappiness to Letitia and Mrs. Bushe. Sir George, perhaps embittered by his disappointment in Crosby, became quite unbearably tyrannical. He went so far as to vow that before he went back to town Letitia should be married to Humphrey Barrett. Letitia, losing something of her brave spirit since Crosby had disappeared and nothing more was heard of him, spent most of her time in tears, which did not soften Sir George at all, and spoiled her eyes and complexion sadly.

About three weeks had passed in this disagreeable way, and Letitia was getting tired of crying, and beginning to wonder whether Crosby had forgotten her, when one evening things came to a crisis.

The weather had changed and grown warmer; the snow had all melted away by degrees, and everything was enjoying itself under soft blue sky and sunlight; there was a sweet smell of spring

in the wind that blew freshly across the green meadows and lanes.

Mrs. Barrett and her daughters took advantage of this fine weather to walk down one day in thick boots and warm shawls from the Castle, and pay a visit to Letitia. The young lady appeared, after a good deal of persuasion from Mrs. Bushe, and even her stony heart was melted a little by their extreme friendliness. The girls looked so simple and good ; Mrs. Barrett talked in a sensible downright kindly way, and did not mention Humphrey's name. Letitia was obliged to be polite, for, after all, Mrs. Barrett's dance was a pleasant recollection ; her spirits were elastic, and she was a little tired and even ashamed of crying so much. When they went away, however, Mrs. Barrett lost her advantage by kissing Letitia, and saying with oppressive motherliness, 'My dear, we are very happy. We are all so fond of you.'

Letitia did not quite see the meaning of this, for it had never entered into her head, whatever her father might say, that she was to marry Humphrey whether she liked it or not. She thought Mrs. Barrett was a stupid woman, but submitted to be kissed in silence. The girls seemed half inclined to follow their mother's example ; but Letitia held out her hand in a way that admitted of no question at all ; she had no notion of being on such terms with the whole Barrett family. Mrs. Bushe looked on in melancholy silence ; her spirits had become lower in these last few days, as Letitia's had risen a little. Some awful secret seemed to be weighing on her mind.

When Letitia went up-stairs to dress for dinner she was surprised to find Florinda in her room, con-

sulting with her maid and a London workwoman over endless yards of white satin and a large box full of feathers and flowers. Florinda looked round with startled eyes at the girl as she came in ; she had not expected her quite so soon. Letitia stared at these preparations.

'What is all that ? A new gown of yours ?' she said to her cousin.

'Have you seen your papa, my dear, since our visitors went ?' said Mrs. Bushe.

'No ; how should I ?' answered Letitia.

After several stormy interviews with his daughter, Sir George had ended by leaving her to herself, and as far as possible ignoring her existence ; for the last week they had scarcely exchanged a word.

'He had something to tell you —I thought he would have told you,' said Mrs. Bushe, rather confused.

'I have not seen him. What beautiful satin ! It looks like somebody's wedding-gown.'

Letitia took hold of the satin and shook it out on the floor, holding it against her own pretty figure. 'There, Atkins, pick up my train. Don't you see I'm going to Court ?' she said, laughing, to the maid.

'Miss Monkton will look beautiful, ma'am,' said the workwoman, a person they often employed, turning to Mrs. Bushe for sympathy.

But in Florinda's face there was nothing but the deepest sadness.

'Mrs. Bushe hates these vanities,' said Letitia. 'You will be splendid for once, though, cousin Florinda. What a pity you did not get it in time for that ball !'

'Come into your room, dear child. I must speak to you,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'Do not mind these

things now, Atkins; we will see them another time. I will ring when I want you.'

'Well, what is the matter? Anything new?' said Letitia.

There was a straight hard little sofa at the foot of the bed, on which Mrs. Bushe sat down, while the girl stood in front of her.

'O Letitia,' said Mrs. Bushe, 'your father is very cruel. It is wrong of me to say it, I know, but I must. Is it possible that you are still the only one in this house, or even in this neighbourhood, who does not know what is to happen next Thursday?'

In days long after, when Letitia told the story of her life, she never could remember that moment without shivering. It was so cold, so sudden, the feeling of absolute loneliness, and then the almost passion of self-reliance which followed it. She was never the same again; that evening ended her childhood. It was a woman, cruelly hurt, but not in the least subdued, that stood before Mrs. Bushe and gazed at her silently. Florinda was by far the most agitated of the two. She had expected a stormy scene with Letitia, but this stoniness was much more dreadful.

'My dear,' she said, 'sit down here. Speak to me!'

'I cannot conceive what you mean,' said Letitia quietly. 'You are talking riddles, and I hate them as much as papa does. What is to happen next Thursday?'

'O Letitia, you are so unlike yourself!' said Mrs. Bushe, beginning to cry.

'For Heaven's sake don't do that! Be reasonable,' said Letitia. 'I ask you a simple question; but I can answer it myself, for I understand now. You and papa are wonderful people indeed. Next Thursday is my wedding-

day, when you mean to marry me to Humphrey Barrett. Everybody is charmed, with one exception; and that fine satin gown is expected to keep *her* quiet. Very clever indeed.'

'Letitia, you will break my heart!' sighed Mrs. Bushe.

'You are doing your best to break mine; but fortunately it is not so fragile.'

'What could I do? I was forced to obey Sir George. I thought he would have told you himself before this.'

'I should like to understand the why and the wherefore of it all,' said Letitia coolly.

'Your papa thought that if you found everything was finally settled with the Barretts, you would be more likely to submit quietly,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'He is going abroad again very soon, and he thought, considering all the circumstances, it would be best to leave you safely married. They are really very good people, and admire you so much.'

Florinda spoke faintly and wistfully. Letitia listened with her eyes on the ground. There were no tears, no exclamations; she did not even change colour. After a little pause she turned away from her cousin, and walked up to the table.

'We shall be late for dinner,' she said. 'You had better go and dress.'

Florinda left her silently. This new mood of Letitia's, the cold indifference of her manner, was harder to bear than anything that had gone before. She longed to put her arms round the girl, to weep with her, to comfort her, to be reproached and scolded, if only she might give her love and sympathy. If there had been any wild despair in Letitia's manner, such as she had read of in romances, she would have been

frightened. There was none, and yet she was frightened.

What made it still stranger and more unnatural was, that Letitia talked all through dinner to Sir George with a pleasantness which astonished him. She had lately taken some interest in poultry, had been feeding the chickens and the ducks herself, and she wanted to know something about foreign fowls—how they were managed and fed, and what were the best breeds. Sir George knew nothing, but tried to say something. He also was uncomfortably conscious of the change in Letitia—that she had grown up in this one afternoon, that her heart was no longer in her face. He wondered what it meant. After dinner, when Mrs. Bushe got up to go into the drawing-room, Letitia remained a moment standing, with her hands on the back of her chair, facing her father as he walked across to the door.

'Papa,' she said, while both Sir George and Florinda hesitated between the table and the door, 'I have to thank you for my beautiful wedding-gown.'

Sir George tried to speak and to smile, stammered frightfully, and grunted out,

'Glad you are pleased with it.'

'I should have liked longer notice,' said Letitia, with a coolness which struck Mrs. Bushe as quite awful. 'But I suppose it was not convenient to you. There is one thing I must ask, however.'

'What is it? Anything I can do?' said Sir George, beginning to feel great relief and pride in the success of his plan.

'I think you forget how little I know of Mr. Humphrey Barrett. We really ought to make more acquaintance. I wish you would ask him to dine with us to-morrow.'

'With the greatest pleasure,

Letty. My dear girl, you little know how gratified I am,' said Sir George earnestly. 'Now mind, you must ask me for anything you want—anything that money can buy. No reward can be too great for dutifulness.'

He came forward, as if he meant to kiss his daughter; but she did not seem to see this, and went quietly out of the room after her cousin. Sir George, very much pleased, sat down to finish his port. It was evident that he, at least, knew how to manage a refractory young woman.

Presently Mrs. Bushe opened the door softly, came in, and sat down near him a little way from the table. Sir George looked up, and wondered what was the matter with her. He did not quite see why Florinda should choose to put on such a solemn face when everything was going well, when Letitia had made up her mind to submit, and had lifted such a weight of anxiety off her friends' shoulders.

'You don't look well, Florinda,' said Sir George amiably. 'You took nothing at dinner. Let me give you a glass of port.'

Florinda thanked him, and declined this decidedly.

'I am obliged to you,' she said; 'I am perfectly well.'

'Ah, glad to hear it,' said Sir George. 'Well, is it some clever management of yours that has brought Letty to her senses? I give you great credit. I am most agreeably surprised.'

'O, I don't want you to deceive yourself,' said Mrs. Bushe, her voice trembling. 'I am in great alarm about Letitia. She saw the white satin gown, and I was obliged to break it to her suddenly. I never saw anything so extraordinary as her manner. She is not submissive, Sir George. She is in despair.'

'Despair ! absurdity ! Does it look like despair, begging me to ask Barrett to dinner ? You are too sensitive and fanciful, Florinda, to understand a girl of Letty's character. She has a great power of accommodating herself to circumstances, of making up her mind strongly on any one point. She inherits it from me. A power of self-conquest, in which you may, perhaps, be rather deficient. No reproach to you. It belongs to the natural character. Letitia is only behaving as I confidently expected her to behave. She has been too much indulged. As soon as she finds that I am seriously in earnest, she submits with a good grace. Despair ! you have been reading too many novels.'

Florinda had a dim idea that she could not trust her own senses, and therefore she quietly accepted Sir George's contradictions. First he was agreeably surprised ; then it was what he had confidently expected. After all, it did not matter much what his feelings were. She sighed and got up.

'I can only tell you my impressions,' she said. 'Letitia's manner to me is a new thing. She is reserved, cold, abrupt. She sits buried in thought, or talks in a strained unnatural way. She is not herself. I believe that if by any means she can escape this marriage, she will. And I must say, Sir George, at the risk of offending you, that in my opinion, by forcing her into it, you are doing a great cruelty to your only child.'

'My esteem for you is very great,' Sir George replied gravely. 'But on this subject we differ, and must continue to do so. I am satisfied with my arrangements for Letitia, and with her acceptance of them. At present I desire to look no further.'

He had his hand on the handle of the door, ready to open it.

'I wonder where Captain Crosby is,' said Mrs. Bushe.

'Why should you vex me by mentioning his name ?'

'I do not believe a word of that story about his birth.'

'He may not be a tailor's son,' said Sir George, 'but he is an adventurer of some kind, of course. Otherwise he would have made no mystery about his family. Cannot you understand, Florinda, what I explained to you the other day—that it is specially to save Letitia from any consequences of an absurd fancy for him, that I have hastened on this marriage ? A year or two hence you will do me justice. You will not talk of my cruelty, but of my wisdom.'

Sir George bowed his cousin out of the room and went back to his port, very much satisfied with himself. He was glad he had kept his temper with poor Florinda, provoking as she might be ; of course all she said was dictated by sincere affection for Letitia and himself. Still the rôle of Cassandra was a very tiresome one, and he wondered she had not the tact and good sense to avoid it.

CHAPTER IX.

A FORLORN HOPE.

LETITIA began the next day by being measured for her satin gown. She went through this without showing much interest ; but also without any appearance of disgust. Afterwards she put on her red cloak and went out to feed the chickens.

There was a large paved yard behind the house, with stables and coach-houses and dog-kennels all round, and a wooden granary in the middle, built on posts

several feet above the ground. On the steep steps of this granary Letitia stood with her bag of grain, and at the sound of her voice the feathered creatures ran and flew from every corner of the place. White pigeons came fluttering down from the roofs and chimneys, and perched about her; cocks strutted, hens cackled and quarrelled; the little lady was in the midst of a noisy greedy crowd, over which she poured showers of yellow grain. While she was doing this the yard-gate opened, and a tall young woman came in with a basket of eggs on her arm. She half paused at the sight of Letitia, standing there in the sun. Then she curtseyed and came towards her, stepping carefully among the chickens.

Miss Monkton looked rather curiously at her bright rosy face, at the clear dark eyes which were watching her so anxiously, and glancing round now and then as she came, as if to make sure that there was nobody within sight or hearing. All the doors were shut; the men were busy or away; only one old dog looked out of his kennel, wagged his tail, and went back again.

'Pray, ma'am, do you remember me?' said the young woman with the eggs, standing at the foot of the steps, and dropping another curtsey.

There was no peasant shyness in her manner, but the well-bred fearless ease of a yeoman's daughter. She was well dressed too, and carried her basket gracefully. And there was a kindness in her smile which made Letitia smile too as she answered her,

'I am sure I have seen you before.'

'I have brought eggs and butter to the house many a time. I've got some eggs here now; but I came to-day on purpose to see

you, ma'am. I am Kitty Pratt, of Jack's Croft.'

'Can I do anything for you?' said Letitia.

'Will you kindly read this, ma'am, and give me an answer to take back?'

A small sealed note appeared from under the folds of Kitty's shawl. Letitia felt almost dizzy as she took it; the writing was familiar to her. She turned away to read it. Kitty quietly set down her basket, took the bag of grain, and went on feeding the impatient fowls.

'The bearer of this can be trusted. Will you send me word by her whether the terrible report I hear is true? I am not far from you, but dare not compromise you by appearing. Tell me that if it is true, it is against your will, and it shall never happen.'

Letitia read this three or four times over. Then she turned quite calmly to Kitty Pratt.

'This note tells me you are to be trusted,' she said.

Kitty's eyes met hers with a smile that was nothing but truth.

'I see you are,' said Letitia. 'The gentleman who sent it, is he at your house?'

'Yes,' said Kitty. 'He came two days ago, and asked my father to take him in. He wished to be in this neighbourhood without any one knowing. He has not told us his name. We call him the Captain.'

'Tell him to wait till to-morrow,' said Letitia. 'He shall have an answer to-morrow, do you understand? Tell him there is one chance to be tried; but it may fail. Will you remember that?'

Kitty nodded.

'Have not you butter or eggs, or something to bring here to-morrow?'

'I could bring two pound of

butter, if Mrs. Bushe liked to order it.'

'I order it. Bring it to the house about this time to-morrow, and, as you go back, look for me outside the gates, under the trees yonder: you can carry my answer. Thank you. Now take your eggs to the house.'

Kitty curtsied and went, without another word.

All that day Letitia was a great trial to her affectionate cousin. When she answered or spoke to her, there was a studied carelessness in her manner, an abruptness that was almost rude, and quite silenced gentle Mrs. Bushe. She also felt that the girl avoided her as much as possible.

Towards evening Letitia seemed a little excited; her cheeks were very pink, and her eyes brighter than usual. She did not put on one of her prettiest gowns to receive young Barrett; but in spite of that, Mrs. Bushe thought she had seldom looked prettier. It was a painful prettiness, though, to any one who knew Letitia well. As to Humphrey, his position seemed quite to puzzle him. He was rather grave and silent all through dinner, though Sir George did his best to draw him out. Certainly no stranger, looking in upon them, would have guessed that the two young people were to be married to each other in a week. They sat on opposite sides of the table, and hardly exchanged a word.

After dinner, in the drawing-room, Letitia said to Mrs. Bushe, 'Will you do me one more favour?'

'One more, my dear?' said Florinda wonderingly.

'Will you let me be alone with Humphrey, when he comes in? Pray don't hesitate. It is the only chance of our understanding each other, and I suppose you think that desirable.'

'O Letitia, you puzzle me completely. If you knew what I feel!' sighed Florinda.

Letitia smiled coldly.

'My dear, do you hate this man?'

'What a strange question! Hate him! O no, I am not so uncharitable. All men are our brothers, you know, so it would be wicked to hate one of them. But don't look agonised, for I really have seen him much worse than he is to-night. The idea of marrying me seems to have tamed him; he is quite awed and downcast. I shall have to tell him not to be afraid of me.'

'Letitia,' said Mrs. Bushe very gravely, 'this whole business distresses me more than I can say. But to hear you speak in this terrible, unnatural, almost unwomanly way, is the worst part of it all. I will go, for I cannot bear to be with you. Why did you not say at once to your father that you would not and could not marry this man?'

'Papa has a bad ally in you, cousin Florinda,' answered Letitia quietly. 'And it is the last thing I should have expected of you, to advise disobedience. But when one is driven to the end of one's resources, and is without friends or help, one must fight people with their own weapons. A hateful thing to do, but sometimes the only thing. You must hope, now, that Humphrey Barrett and I may agree.'

'I don't in the least understand you,' said Mrs. Bushe. 'I think I shall go mad, if I talk to you any longer.'

'Then pray go and rest in your own room,' said Letitia.

Mrs. Bushe went. Letitia walked restlessly up and down the room till she heard the distant opening of a door, and a heavy step coming along the hall. Then

she sat down by the fire with a screen in her hand, to receive Humphrey.

He was rather startled by finding her alone. All his bullying self-assertion seemed to have left him; he was tamed, as she said, by this swift and strange realisation of his wishes. He drew a chair near her, sat down, and looked at her. Letitia glanced at him over her screen, and said the evening was rather cold.

'Is it? I have not felt it so,' said Humphrey.

Then they were both silent for a minute or two. Humphrey was angry with himself for being such an ass as to have nothing to say to this lovely girl, who had actually consented to be his wife—so her father assured him; but even to his dim perceptions she was wrapped in an icy mist, beyond his power of penetrating. At last, rather bluntly, he put some of his thoughts into words.

'Is it not strange to think what will have happened, this time next week! Can you imagine it at all? I can't.'

'O, perfectly,' said Letitia; 'I have heard so much about it, to-day and yesterday.'

'Well, I'm very glad to hear that,' said Humphrey. 'I really was in despair; and you don't know what it is to me to have it all settled like this. My people admire you, and all that, as much as I do. We none of us thought that you would ever bring your mind to it; but you shall never regret it, I promise you that.'

Heavens! what sort of love-making was this! Even in her desperate position Letitia felt as if she must laugh. She did smile, and this had the effect of cheering and emboldening Humphrey.

'Letitia—I don't know a prettier name,' he said. 'I've been

told that it means "joy," and if so it suits you well. One never could be dismal with you.'

'I am glad you think so,' said Letitia, 'though I am afraid you are mistaken. I wish I knew you a little better, Mr. Barrett.'

'Well, you will soon do that. But call me Humphrey, if you please,' said the young squire, pulling his chair a little nearer.

Letitia, however, did not look encouraging, and this was his furthest advance.

'I want to tell you something, and to ask you something,' she said, 'and I wish I knew how you are likely to answer me.'

'How do you think, now?'

'Kindly and generously, I hope,' said Letitia, in a low voice.

'I'm glad you do me so much justice,' said Humphrey. 'Always be true and open with me; you will find it your best policy. You don't understand what I feel for you, I see that. Come, then, try how far you can trust an Englishman.'

Letitia changed colour slightly at this last word.

'You know,' she said, 'that all this arrangement for next week was made by papa without any knowledge or consent of mine. I only heard of it when everything was finally settled. I might have made a great fuss, but I am tired—I have had trouble and vexation enough lately, and I thought that my best way was to speak to you.'

'We have all had vexation enough, and from the same cause,' said Humphrey, as she stopped for a moment.

'Then you understand me. I have only to tell you that I meant what I said that day. It is dreadful for me to say this to you, but this treatment has driven me to forget that I am a young girl. Nobody will tell you if I don't.'

Letitia turned her face towards

him. All the pretty colour had been driven from it by strong feeling ; she was white and like a statue, except her deep blue eyes. But all the sweetness was gone from them ; they gazed at Humphrey with a sad wild sternness. Most men would have felt a little nervous at the idea of marrying the owner of them. Humphrey scowled jealously, as he had so often done before.

'What ! you are still thinking about that impostor fellow ?'

'Wait ; you have not heard all yet,' said Letitia hastily. She felt that in another minute or two it would be impossible to speak to him.

She got up, and Humphrey did the same ; they stood two or three yards apart in front of the fire.

'I want to appeal to you,' Letitia said. 'If you are kind and generous, I must tell you what you will do now. It is for your own advantage as well as mine. Do you want to marry a woman who will make your life miserable ?'

'I certainly shall not do that,' said Humphrey.

'Ah, well, if you wish to avoid it, you will set me free. Tell papa we have agreed that we don't understand each other, that we could never make each other happy. I will tell him so too. Let me go.'

'Here is a fine position for a man,' said Humphrey—'to be thrown aside like an old glove, because of a mad fancy for a fellow no better than an Irish beggar ! I'll wager anything you like you will never see or hear of him again. He has played his game and lost it.'

'Perhaps I never may see him again,' said Letitia. 'That has nothing to do with what I ask you : will you release me from

this engagement, that was made without my knowledge ?'

'Now I call that asking too much,' said Humphrey. 'All my friends know I am going to be married ; I've asked them to the wedding. My father has made law arrangements for me—everything has been settled. A fine fool I should look if it was broken off now. And you can't ask it—you can't expect it ; I who have loved you so long and so faithfully, and was so happy at the thoughts of your having given in at last. Sir George so pleased too—everybody satisfied—and you must needs go and upset it all.'

There was something so grotesquely peevish in Humphrey's indignation, that Letitia began to feel a sort of contemptuous pity for him. It was impossible to carry on any tragical pleading with a man like this.

'There's nothing in any of those reasons,' she said, 'to compare with a life of misery.'

'But it will not be that. As soon as you get used to it, you will be happy and thankful,' Humphrey persisted.

Letitia shook her head.

'It is no use arguing the matter,' she said. 'I hear papa coming. Once for all, will you release me or not ?'

'No, that I won't,' answered Humphrey decidedly.

Letitia left the room instantly, gliding past Sir George in the passage, and springing up-stairs so quickly that he had not time to speak to her. Mrs. Bushe, going down presently, found that she was fled ; and was not much surprised that she did not appear again that night. Humphrey went away soon after, without mentioning the trying scene he had gone through.

When Mrs. Bushe went up-stairs to bed, she ventured to look

into Letitia's room. The girl was sitting in her dressing-gown by the fire.

'Come in and say good-night,' she said, in a voice that went to her cousin's heart; it was the old Letitia come back again, only with a new tenderness of manner. 'I love you, because you are the only one of them all that loves me. Don't break your heart about me, dear Florinda.'

She held out her arms. Mrs. Bushe laid her head on her shoulder and cried, while Letitia kissed and soothed her gently; there were no tears in her eyes.

'There, don't be unhappy,' said Letitia. 'It will all be right in the end. It is no use fighting against Fate you know. Good-night. Go to bed now, and don't think about me any more.'

Mrs. Bushe, however, lay awake all that night. Once she felt obliged to go and see what Letitia was doing, whether she was able to forget her trouble in sleep. But the door between the rooms was locked; and to her cousin's tender inquiries in the morning Letitia would only answer, 'Why shouldn't I sleep?'

CHAPTER X.

JACK'S CROFT.

THE kitchen at Jack's Croft was a great picturesque room, with an enormous fireplace and seats in the chimney-corner. A broad staircase went up on one side. The furniture was heavy and old, all in the dark oak, worn by constant use and polishing, which one finds still in some out-of-the-way farmhouses. There was handsome old blue china on the dresser, and the rough beams of the ceiling were a hanging forest of bacon and dried herbs. Before

the fire, which had a blazing log on it, stood Mrs. Pratt, bright and picturesque as her house, tall and sturdily built, with dark eyes and rosy cheeks, like her daughter Kitty's. Kitty, the only child and heiress of Jack's Croft, stood leaning against the table, with a basket in her hand and a shawl thrown over her arm.

'Mercy on us!' said Mrs. Pratt. 'And where is she now?'

'I left her in the garden with him,' answered Kitty, smiling. 'He was looking out for me, you see, and he met us at the gate. I never saw such a look on a man's face, mother. How he does worship her, to be sure!'

'Well, Kitty, it's the queerest affair altogether as ever I heard tell of. She can't stay here, you know. You'll have to take her back, or perhaps father 'll drive her in the gig. It's a long way for a girl that isn't used to trudging, like you are. She had no business to have come at all, and that's the long and short of it. You oughtn't to have brought her.'

'You'd have done the same, mother, if she'd looked up in your face and said, "My whole happiness depends on seeing that gentleman at once. Let me go home with you." You couldn't have set yourself against her, sweet pretty creature.'

As Kitty spoke Crosby and Letitia came in together. Mrs. Pratt curtsied, and hastened to set a chair for the young lady. However shocked the good woman might be, she could not forget her manners.

'No, thank you. I cannot sit down,' said Letitia quickly. 'O Mrs. Pratt, I hear you are very kind-hearted. I have so much to ask you.'

'Mrs. Pratt is the very best woman in the world,' said Crosby.

'The most generous and the noblest. That is lucky for us, as our whole future depends upon her.'

'Law, sir, I don't understand you,' said Mrs. Pratt.

'My dear friend,' said Crosby, with the greatest earnestness, 'let me explain to you. When I accepted your hospitality, and that of your good husband, I told you that private affairs of my own, about which I was very anxious, might keep me for a few days in this neighbourhood. Now you see the explanation. I need not say any more, need I?'

Mrs. Pratt looked from one charming young face to the other. She could not help smiling; but she bit her lips and shook her head.

'Why, sir, I don't clearly see what you are driving at,' she said. 'And if you want my opinion, it is that this lady had better go quietly home again.'

'Don't be so cruel and severe, Mrs. Pratt. You are giving her quite a false idea of you,' said Crosby.

'Well, sir,' said Mrs. Pratt, with firmness, 'if our Kitty was to run off to somebody else's house to meet a young man without our approval, I know very well what her father and me would say to her.'

'But Kitty would never be so cruelly treated as I have been, so driven to extremity,' said Letitia. 'For no reason my father turned him out of the house, and means to force me to marry another man. All depends on my escaping. I must escape. Mrs. Pratt, you will help us?'

Letitia came forward and took one of the good woman's strong brown hands, holding it tight between her own, and looking up with eyes that might have softened a millstone.

'My dear,' said the farmer's wife tenderly, 'do just consider what a foolish thing you are doing. Leaving your home and everything just because a handsome young gentleman asks you. There ain't one among them, my dear, that's worth it. If I was to do my duty I should just have the horse put in, and get the master to drive you back home this minute. I never heard such madness in my life. As for you, sir, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Pray how do you expect me to help you?'

'Perhaps your friendliness made me expect too much,' said Crosby. 'But since I received this lady just now at the garden-gate, I have thought that you would persuade your husband to lend me his gig and that strong horse I admire so highly. Then I should drive to London, where discovery is almost impossible. It also seemed to me likely that you might allow your daughter to accompany us. I would see to her safe return.'

At these demands Mrs. Pratt lost patience, and observed very sharply that gentlefolks thought the world was made for them. She begged the Captain to give her no more of his nonsense. She would not listen to another word. Kitty go with them, indeed! Kitty was a respectable young woman, who had never been in London in her life; and never should go to such a wicked place with her mother's good will.

At the end of all this, which sounded rather hopeless, Letitia sank into a chair and hid her face in her hands. Captain Crosby frowned as he stood beside her.

'Are you ill, dear madam?' said Kitty, going up to Letitia.

'Yea. I am very tired and miserable,' sighed Letitia.

'Bless her dear heart, I daresay

she is,' said Mrs. Pratt, all her natural kindness returning. 'Come, then, my pretty one, go up-stairs and rest in Kitty's room for a while. Then you shall go quietly home. They're all wild after you already.'

'I shall never go home,' said Letitia.

'Well, anyhow, go and rest yourself a bit. You're that excited, you don't know what you're saying. That's right; lean on Kitty, my dear.'

Crosby stood and saw his lady-love conveyed away up the dark old staircase. It was true that the painful excitement she had gone through lately, added to the fatigue of that morning's walk, had been almost too much for Letitia. He was almost wild, between anxiety for her, and the difficulty of getting out of this new scrape with success and honour.

'You will do a very cruel and very foolish thing, Mrs. Pratt,' he said, 'if you refuse to help us in such an emergency as this.'

'Sir,' said Mrs. Pratt, 'I'm sorry to disagree with a gentleman like you. But your own conscience tells you that it's a cruel and a foolish thing *you're* wanting to do. No good ever came of a young lady's going against the will of her family.'

'Confound her family!'

'I won't be sworn at in my own kitchen, sir, if you please,' said Mrs. Pratt.

'I beg your pardon,' said Crosby, bowing. 'I am a good deal irritated just now, and with reason.'

He walked out through a door that led into the garden. Mrs. Pratt looked after him.

'I never did see a pleasanter young man, nor a handsomer,' she soliloquised. 'But the impudence of these here officers! Our best horse, and Kitty into the

bargain! What'll he want next, I wonder? That young lady goes back to Sir George's this very day, as soon as Pratt comes in, or I'm not mistress in my own house. I'll have no such doings here.'

Crosby was mooning about up and down the tidy garden-walks, almost at his wits' end what to do with his treasure, now that he had it, when Kitty Pratt came carefully creeping down in the shadow of a hedge, beckoning to him. He joined her, and they had a long confidential talk in an arbour, where her father smoked his pipe on summer evenings. Then Kitty went back in the same cautious manner to the house again.

That was a strange day at the farm—it was very still, the sun was shining, and the hours crawled on slowly—to Mrs. Pratt, vexed and anxious, as she waited for her husband to come in; to Letitia, following Kitty's advice by staying in her room; to Kitty herself, with all her resolution and cleverness; to Crosby, as he wandered about outside, uneasy, in spite of his faith in Kitty, and not caring to go in and encounter her mother.

Towards one o'clock a message came in from the farmer, saying that there was no need to wait dinner for him. A friend of his, ten miles off, had sent to say that some of his most valuable cows were ill, and he should be glad to see him and hear his opinion of them. So he had ridden off at once from the field, and very likely would not be back till late at night.

Mrs. Pratt and Kitty and Crosby by dined together rather silently at the great kitchen-table, the servants dining in the back kitchen beyond. Letitia did not come down. After dinner Mrs. Pratt retired into the parlour, and seated herself in her own large armchair,

quite determined, with such dangerous people in the house, not to go to sleep as usual. But nature and habit were too much for her, and perhaps she slept with unusual soundness, after her agitation in the morning.

Crosby went out into the garden, and Kitty into the yard, where everything was very quiet. There was always a lull in the farm-work in the middle of the day, and just now not a man was to be seen about the premises; possibly one or two were resting themselves in a warm corner of the barn. Kitty went to the yard-gate, and looked up and down the road; not a creature to be seen. Yes! there was a horse trotting up the lane. In another minute he had stopped at the gate.

'Good-day,' said Kitty, perceiving at once that the rider was one of Sir George's men.

'Good-day, missus. We are in sad trouble down at Sir George Monkton's. Our young lady's gone, and we are searching for her all over the country. You haven't seen nothing of her?'

'If I had,' said Kitty, 'don't you think I'd have brought her back by now? She's not a young lady to be wandering about by herself.'

'That she ain't. Well, I wonder where she can be gone. There was that Irish gentleman, Captain Crosby, as they say is a tailor's son. Sir George thinks she's run off with him, perhaps to London.'

'Mark my words,' said Kitty; 'if she's gone with him, they'd never do such a blundering thing as go to London. Why, it's full of Sir George's friends, surely. They'd find them in a minute. No, they'd have gone straight off to Ireland. No doubt about it. That's the road you ought to take, young man, if you want to catch them.'

'Ireland! Well, and I shouldn't wonder if you was right, missus,' said the man; and he touched his hat and rode off.

'Crosby—a tailor's son!' repeated Kitty to herself as she turned from the gate. 'Anyhow I must help them. I wonder if she knows it, though, throwing of herself away like that. Well, it's time for me to harness Boney.'

Fortunately for Kitty's designs the stable where her father's best horses lived, and the place where the gig was kept, were in a quiet corner of the premises, with their backs turned to the large yard, and opening on a little grass yard of their own, only commanded from the house by Kitty's own window. From this small court there were two gates, one into the large yard, the other into a large field with a grass road across it, so that a carriage could drive away from Jack's Croft quite silently.

Just as Kitty was buckling her last strap, Captain Crosby appeared at the stable-door.

'Doing it yourself?' he said.

'The fewer we trust, the safer we are, sir,' replied Kitty.

'It is early for you to have come to that conclusion,' said Crosby, hardly noticing the coolness of Kitty's manner towards himself.

'Well, sir, if you'll put him into the gig,' said Kitty, 'I'll fetch the young lady.'

'Kitty, one moment; are you repenting of your goodness to us?'

'Repeal!' said Kitty scornfully. She hesitated a moment, and then went on, speaking very quickly: 'There was one of Sir George's men at the gate just now, asking for her. I sent him off pretty quick. But he told me something about you.'

'What was it, now? That my father was a tailor?'

His laughing eyes were almost too much for Kitty ; she turned away from them.

'Well, if he was, you're not good enough for Miss Monkton ; you know you're not. And I suppose she knows nothing about it ?'

'Ask her. Say anything you like to her. I give you free permission,' said Crosby.

'I might do it without that,' muttered Kitty, as she walked away.

She found Letitia in a state of feverish impatience waiting for her. She had been looking out of the window into the little yard, had seen Crosby standing at the stable-door laughing, and wondered why in the world he was wasting time so. Kitty looked rather grave as she came into the room.

'Before we go down, ma'am, may I say a word to you ?' she said.

'O yes ; to tell me to walk softly. Of course I will,' said Letitia.

'Yes ; but there's something else. I've promised to serve you, and I mean to keep my word ; but I've heard just now something about the Captain, from one who came asking after you. They say he's a tailor's son, and I thought you ought to know it.'

'Why, Kitty,' exclaimed Letitia, turning round in a sudden fire of indignation, 'am I to be tormented with this by you, too ? I neither know nor care whose son he is. If he was your lover, would you care whether his father was a king, or a tailor, or something much lower still—a beggar in the streets, if you like ? Wouldn't you trust him ?'

'I don't know about that, ma'am,' said Kitty. 'And I shouldn't like either a king or beggar ; one's own station is best.'

'O, plague on all your prudence and wisdom !' cried Letitia. 'There, he has got the horse in. Lead the way now. I'll follow you like a mouse.'

Three minutes later, Captain Crosby, Miss Monkton, and the generous but undutiful Kitty were seated in Farmer Pratt's gig, and his good horse Boney was trotting swiftly and silently across the grass-road towards the labyrinth of cross-country lanes, through which, under Kitty's guidance, they meant to make a bold dash for London.

CHAPTER XI

THE LONDON CHURCH.

If Letitia had once called her country home a living sepulchre, the London house in which she now found herself deserved that title much more. It was in a narrow street of tall dark old houses like itself, with no thoroughfare, so that nobody ever came down it who had not some business at the houses themselves. Even then these houses, though they were close to a busy part of the City, were deserted by the people for whom their fine broad staircases had been built, their large rooms floored with oak, their panellings and balusters carved handsomely. But no wonder, for they were terribly dark and dismal. Letitia could not help feeling this, though the woman to whom the house seemed to belong—a wild, untidy, warm-hearted Mrs. O'Brien—had received the runaways as if they were a prince and princess, had almost gone down on her knees to adore Letitia, and had raved about her beauty till Letitia was obliged to beg her to stop. At last leaving Mrs. O'Brien to Kitty, she found herself standing with

Crosby in one of the windows of the drawing-room, which smelt rather musty in spite of its large fire, and the magnificence of all its yellow brocade and carving and mirrors.

'O Gerald, what a strange house!' said Letitia; 'and who is that funny woman?'

'She is a countrywoman of mine, the best and fairest creature,' said Crosby. 'She was in our service, and then married Lord Killarney's butler; and they took this house with all its old furniture, as you see, and let lodgings. I trust you won't dislike her!'

'O no, not if she is a friend of yours,' said Letitia.

It struck her directly that by a question to Mrs. O'Brien she could probably hear the whole truth as to Crosby's parentage; but this was a temptation easily conquered.

'I shall not ask her who you are,' she said, smiling at him.

'As to that, my darling, please yourself,' answered Crosby.

Letitia shook her head, and the subject was not again alluded to between them.

Kitty was not so delicate-minded. She asked Mrs. O'Brien a whole string of questions, and apparently had satisfactory answers, for her spirits rose, while those of Letitia flagged a little. They remained quietly in the lodgings for a week or more. Crosby, who was staying somewhere else, came to see them every day, and often had to spend most of his time in consoling Letitia, who was seized with fits of homesickness and self-reproach.

'At any rate, my dearest angel,' Crosby remonstrated, 'your father brought it all on himself. If he had not treated you with such tyranny, you would have been at home at this moment, and we

should have waited patiently for better times. But we had no alternative.'

'Ah, yes, I know. But I am so sorry about Florinda. She is such a dear creature, and loves me so sincerely. My happiness was everything to her, and papa made her completely miserable. What must she be feeling now?'

'We will make it all up to her, one of these days,' said Crosby. 'Her home shall be with us; will that please you, my Letitia?'

'Yes, indeed; you are very good.'

Somehow the clouds soon passed away, and the future shone out very brightly again. The mystery of it was only like a soft golden haze, which made it more attractive and delightful. No matter whose son Crosby might turn out to be, he must always be himself, and he was perfection. At last came a morning, when through a thick yellow fog, lighted by linkboys along the streets, a small party of people went from Mrs. O'Brien's house to the very dismallest of City churches, with pews and galleries, stuffy moth-eaten curtains and hangings, a few dim candles lighted about the east end, a fat old clerk with spectacles and a bad cough, a vague dreamy clergyman with a pale face and a mass of gray hair. What a strange wedding for the heiress of Sir George Monkton! Perhaps such things had often happened in that church before, for both parson and clerk seemed to take it as a matter of course; and there was no awaking of interest or curiosity in either pair of eyes, at the sight of this elegant young gentleman and lady in travelling dress, with their two incongruous witnesses, Kitty Pratt and Mrs. O'Brien. The clerk gave away the bride as if it was part of his day's work, and he had

given away hundreds before. The solemn words of the service, gabbed as they were, had a great effect on Letitia; when it was over, she was crying so much that she could hardly see to write her name in the register, and neither saw nor thought of the name that was written above. Kitty did, however, and smiled as she scratched her own.

Gerald Crosby led his wife down the damp old passage between the pews, and out at the side-door of the church into a street where a post-chaise was waiting. He and Letitia were inside it, and the horses were moving, before she realised what had happened.

‘O, good-bye—good-bye, Kitty!’ she cried, starting forward.

Kitty curtseyed, and waved her hand.

‘God bless and prosper ye, my—’ screamed Mrs. O’Brien; the end of her sentence was lost in the rattle of the wheels.

Two days later, Kitty returned to Jack’s Croft in her father’s gig, drawn by Boney, and driven by Mrs. O’Brien’s respectable husband. She brought back with her two or three fashionable gowns and bonnets, a shawl for her mother, a silver-mounted hunting-whip for her father, and a hundred-pound note, which Captain Crosby had left in her hand with a very hearty squeeze, just before he got into the carriage.

After being well scolded and forgiven, Kitty set off to relieve the minds of Letitia’s relations. Fortunately, perhaps, for her, Sir George was in London, searching for the runaways.

Mrs. Bushe never dreamed of reproaching Kitty for her part in the matter. It was too delightful to have her mind so entirely set at rest. She cried first; but soon dried her tears, kissed and thanked

Kitty, and rejoiced with all her heart.

CHAPTER XII.

LADY FITZPATRICK.

THERE was a fashionable place in those days, not a hundred miles from London, which shall be called Gaytown-by-the-Sea. London people who had any reason for disliking Brighton, and yet liked sea air combined with dancing and card-playing, went there a good deal. There were Assembly Rooms, a high promenade overlooking the sea, a few good shops, and a comfortable hotel. The climate was supposed to be very mild, and so it was in the first fortnight of Letitia’s married life, which she spent there. She and her husband, however, did not take much part in the gaieties of the place, neither did they walk up and down the promenade. They spent most of their days away on the shore, enjoying the green tumbling sea and the fantastic forms of the yellow cliffs, picking up shells and seaweed like two happy children. Crosby sketched, and Letitia suggested and admired. People at Gaytown wondered who they were and what they were doing, this young couple who somehow looked more fitted for society than for roughing it as they did, making friends with the fishermen and venturing out in boats on this winter sea with the most surprising boldness. Yet nobody who thought the thing strange knew how strange it really was, and that the young bride herself often wondered who she and her husband were. She had married him in full faith and trust. At the moment when the mystery might have been cleared up to her by a glance at the

register, her mind had been confused and her eyes blinded by tears. Since then Crosby had told her nothing, and she had not chosen to ask him; yet at times, now that the first excitement was over, she felt quite wild with curiosity. Nobody knew where they were, for Crosby would not let her write. Kitty's revelations had been quite enough, he thought, to set Sir George's and everybody's mind at rest. He told Letitia that they knew everything, and were quite happy about her. Letitia smiled as she thought, 'Then you can't be a tailor's son; but she asked no questions, though she wondered how they knew. Crosby saw the wonder in her eyes, and answered it :

'Molly O'Brien was a traitor, and told Kitty all sorts of things.'

'If they all know, why shouldn't I?' thought Letitia, but she did not say it.

One evening, as they walked back along the sands, Crosby said to her,

'This is rather an important day to me, and it is our last but one at Gaytown, unless you wish to stay longer. But you shall decide that to-morrow before I order the horses.'

'As you please,' said Letitia. 'I like the place amazingly. Perhaps we may be here again some day.'

'Yes; for certainly no place can be associated with more charming recollections.'

'No, indeed. But what is it that makes this an important day to you?'

'It is three years to-night since I laid a wager, which I have won. And after all it was not such a foolish one,' said Crosby.

The morning of that next day broke with furious showers of hail, and Letitia, who had been looking

forward to a last walk, stood at the window rather disappointed. Her husband, however, was in the highest spirits. He had not told her anything yet, and, now that the suspense was just over, it is sad to have to say that Letitia's happy faith began to flag a little. She was tired, perhaps; at any rate, she thought that secrets and wagers and all such things were tiresome and ridiculous, and that it did not much signify after all whether her father-in-law—he was dead, too—had been an Irish tailor or an Irish squire. But she was ashamed of her ill-temper all the time, and looked up smiling when her husband pointed out a ray of sunshine shooting from under a flying cloud, and said that the weather was clearing off, and they might as well take a turn on the promenade.

'To tell you the truth, my dear Letty,' he said, 'I promised to meet a friend there. So pray put your bonnet on, and let us go at once.'

'O yes! What friend is it?' asked Letitia. 'I had no notion that you knew any one here.'

'He arrived from town last night,' said Crosby; and with this Letitia had to be satisfied.

By the time they reached the promenade the sun had fairly chased the clouds away, and was shining out quite warmly and pleasantly. The sea was covered with white horses frisking, and made a great noise as it came thundering on the rocks down below. There was a fresh wind still blowing, and people who ventured on the promenade could hardly keep their feet at first. In consequence of this it was almost deserted. But at the further end of it there was a quiet place sheltered by a wall of cliff; and here, long before they reached it, Letitia saw a lady and gentleman standing.

'Are those your friends, Gerald?' she said.

'Yes, dearest,' he answered, pressing her arm, and looking down with a bright triumphant smile.

The rude wind had disarranged his wife's bonnet a little, and had blown some curls over her face. But he thought she had never looked more lovely than she did that morning by the sea, as he led her on to meet those two who were waiting for them in the shadow of the rock.

As for those two, the lady was middle-aged and the gentleman young. As Letitia came nearer to him, she saw in their smiling dark eyes, their graceful figures, their whole air and appearance, such a wonderful likeness to Crosby, that she half stopped and clung to him.

'O Gerald, who are they?'

He did not answer; for, seeing her movement, the lady came quickly forward.

'Mother, this is my wife,' said Gerald gently.

'My sweet girl!' said the lady, embracing Letitia, who felt as if she was in a dream.

'Will Lady Fitzpatrick spare a word to her brother Denis?' said the young man after a moment; and Letitia turned round to shake hands with the strongest possible likeness of her husband. Only Denis was rather shorter, and not quite so ornamental.

'Ah, now tell me who he is!' said Letitia, looking up at Gerald's mother with all the earnestness of an Irish girl.

'Do you mean to say he has not told you? You poor dear heroic creature!'

'Why, my lady, of course he has not told her!' exclaimed Denis, laughing. 'He would have lost that wager of ours, which I have regretted so bitterly ever

since. However, my five thousand pounds won't go out of the family, that is some comfort. Now, Fitzpatrick, I hope you mean to pay your debts. By the bye, all is smooth for you with Sir George Monkton. We met him in town the day before yesterday. He attacked me like a raging lion, actually mistaking me for you—that's a compliment for you. I could not have pacified him, but her ladyship took him in hand and brought him to reason.'

'Hush, Denis; remember who you are talking of,' said his mother. 'Come, dear Letitia, I'll walk with you to your lodging, and we will leave these two rattle-pates to settle their own affairs. I am afraid this distracted wager of theirs has cost you a good deal of suffering.'

'O no,' said Letitia, as the lady took her arm, and walked with her towards the town. 'I could not have been happier. But pray tell me who he is, and all about it.'

'My dear, I can't understand your not knowing. He is Lord Fitzpatrick, of course. Only an Irish peerage, people will tell you; but for my part I think we are as good as the English. As to this wager, he began by spending great sums on building and improving, and a great deal of nonsense. He went beyond his income and got into difficulties. Then he resolved to volunteer into the army. His brother said to him very naturally, that no doubt his name would get him a commission at once. This hurt Fitzpatrick's foolish pride. He told Denis he would lay him a wager of five thousand pounds that he would keep his name and birth a profound secret for three years, be known as nothing but an adventurer, and yet get on in the army as well as any other man. He

even said that if any stories were invented as to his birth, he would not contradict them. We never thought such a mad idea could be carried out for three years. He has done it, however, and has contrived to win you too, by far the gayest feather in his cap. I am obliged to respect him now.'

Lady Fitzpatrick talked a good deal more about her sons and their wagers; but this was all that Letitia cared much to hear. Except that she was glad to find the dear name Crosby not quite an imagination; it was his mother's name. And Gerald was really his own.

The story of Miss Monkton's marriage may as well end here. One has the satisfaction of knowing that Letitia never regretted her trust in the Irish adventurer.

Sir George was angry for some time, and did not finally forgive

them till Humphrey Barrett, having married a rich brewer's daughter, deserted his political colours, and came in for the county on the wrong side, which was his father-in-law's. After this Sir George repented, and was very civil to Lord Fitzpatrick.

Mrs. Bushe took up her abode with Letitia, and lived on the most affectionate terms with her and her husband. Letitia's children grew up to love her and tyrannise over her, as their mother had done before them.

But I will not say anything about Letitia's children, charmingly agreeable people as they are. I can only think of their mother as almost a child herself, dancing round the room in a white frock, all her curls shaking, or trotting smilingly along the snowy shrubbery, wrapped in scarlet, to her first meeting with the hero of her dreams.

THE BELLES OF THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.

CAN Beauty ever grow less rare
In truth or dream ?
Though through long years it has been fair,
Or so men deem.

We still repeat, in strains more new,
The old, old theme ;
And praise rings on in flatt'ry true,
As praise may seem.

Words written in long days gone by—
Sweet days, I ween—
But tell us how all fair things fly—
What is, has been.

Before my eyes strange visions rise—
Perhaps I dream—
I see the smile of azure eyes,
The golden stream

Of bright loose hair in lustrous glow,
The silken sheen
Of radiant hues where bright robes flow
Round Beauty's Queen ;

And red lips curve in tender smile,
And bright eyes gleam
From where the curtained lids beguile—
Some tender dream.

A stately moving crowd pass by,
Less gay, I ween,
Than that which in these days is nigh
To Fashion's Queen.

Yet in past times when Beauty's power
Was thrall unseen,
Yet surely felt in hall and bower,
In glen and green,

What spell or magic could it hold,
What guerdon glean,
That now our languid hours unfold
In stranger mien ?

Are women fair as when God gave
 His curse to sin,
 Ere sorrow's shadows dug the grave
 That all must win ?

No need to look on pictured forms ;
 The years between
 Their lives and ours have passed like storms,
 Unfelt, unseen.

But all the years that still may be,
 Or once have been—
 Each set with stores, so swift to flee,
 So sweet to glean—

What saw they that these new strange days
 Have left unseen,
 When Beauty claims its meed of praise
 For Fashion's Queen ?

Though from the fairest garden flower—
 Pure, pale, serene—
 Our season's belle her sweetest dower
 Has gained, I ween !

Back from the past my fancy glides
 Down Mem'ry's stream ;
 While present loveliness abides,
 More fair 'twill seem.

Through all the season's golden weeks
 No sweeter theme
 The tongue or pen of poet seeks
 Than such a dream

As links the present to the past
 In changeful scene ;
 For Beauty shall all change outlast
 That once has been.

Before my gaze are lovelier eyes
 And sweeter mien ;
 Who's fair to-day, past fame defies,
 As—Fashion's Queen ?

RITA.

THE RESTORER OF ST. MARY'S.

A Warwickshire Story.

OFFA, King of Mercia, must have kept a merry court as well as a splendid one in the days of his imperious rule. Without any sea-coast his realm was comparatively free from fear of the invasions of the sea-kings, and from the richness of the lands, the splendid size and quality of the timber, and the covert afforded by the good greenwood to wild boar and deer, and all sorts of smaller game, Offchurch must have been a centre of prosperity as well as sport. What British Nimrod even now can wish for better winter quarters than are to be found in the midst of that smiling country? What lover of Nature can hope to see more splendid monarchs of the forest than those which rise and shadow with their mighty limbs the park-like fields and glades of Warwickshire? and where can the ear, wearied with the twang of cockney speech, revel in such wells of English undefiled as issue from the lips of the natives of this superlatively midland county? Nor are these its only attractions; for there is a spot in this favoured region where no fewer than twelve springs of different mineral waters percolate through the sandy soil, and draw around them thousands of people whose constitutions have been ruined by the effects of disease or folly, and who find in quaffing the saline or sulphureous contents of the steaming goblets handed them by smiling nymphs, an amusement and distraction, and occasionally a cure.

Waterton has indeed been a

place of rapid growth: half a century ago it numbered only three-score dwellings, one church, no public buildings, and fewer than a thousand inhabitants; and to-day it has its pump-rooms, baths, and libraries, its giant hotels, huge stables, and smart villas, its high school, and public gardens. Its churches are numerous, and suited to every shade of opinion. All, however, fade into insignificance, and are not to be named in the same day as St. Mary's, the oldest of them all, which rises with its hoary tower upon the river bank, and flings the melodies of its eight bells far and wide over the homes of the living and the dead, and audible at incredible distances through the rural reaches of the level land. The architecture within is loveliest Gothic; the stained windows can only be compared in richness of hue to those which adorn St. Gudule in Brussels, or those of the Parisian church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, to the interior of which it bears a certain resemblance. The pulpit, reading-desk, and stalls are specimens of the most exquisite carving, and the spirit at whose behest all these beauties have been brought together is, or rather was, that of the vicar, whose tall form, bowed head, and woe-begone visage might until recently have been seen wandering about in the churchyard with an absent sort of air that invited criticism and distanced confidence. No one could look at the Rev. Philip Curry without seeing that he had

suffered. For forty years among a fluctuating population that came and went like the restless waves upon the shore, there were but few who knew his story, understood his aims, or cared what paths of grief his wandering feet had trod. There was indeed a woman, who haunted a humble grave hard by the western door, who always had a good word for him, but she was only a poor dazed creature, who, though often inquired of by visitors, gave only one reply, and was charitably supposed to know no better. Those who were familiar with the old churchyard in times gone by can hardly fail to remember her—Mary Trustlove was her name, and, by a curious coincidence not always to be met with, her nature too. The grass-grown mound on which she daily sat and crooned to herself as the swift needle passed through her fingers was her lover's grave, for though her flaxen hair was getting gray, and her lustreless eyes were dim and bleared with weeping, she had once been youthful and beloved, or at all events she thought so. She must always have been weak-minded, and her loss had all but overthrown her reason, though she had sense enough to supplement a little annuity by doing plain needle-work, to provide herself always with a pale-blue print gown, and to bend her steps daily to the haven where her heart was. If people spoke to her sharply or jeered her she called them bad, but if they addressed her gently, or did her any little service, they ranked as good in her category, and hence her invariable words about the vicar were, 'He is a good man; a good man he is.' That Mr. Curry was a native of Erin was evident from his voice and appearance, and he frequently told his friends and acquaintances that as a child he was brought

up in the Roman Catholic faith, but abjured it in early manhood, prepared himself to take Holy Orders, and became curate of a parish near Dublin. He was but poor, having only an income of 100*l.* a year besides his curacy; but being foolish enough to dream of the practicability of love in a cottage, married a young lady whose only fortune was her pretty face and sweet disposition, and by way of honeymoon took her to the village near Bantry Bay, where his own youth had been spent. There are few pilgrimages in life more delightful than those made by husband and wife to the early haunts of either; each longs to show the other the nook where he or she was wont to sit and dream of what the coming years might bring, to saunter together beside the shady bank where the first violets bloom, to watch the sunset glow and fade over the purple hills, and to gather every crumb of information that helps in understanding the past of the beloved. Philip and his bride were tasting these joys, and walking arm-in-arm by moonlight down a lane with steep high banks on either side, as they babbled the happy nothings that rise to the lips of the newly-married, when there came a flash, and the young wife, pierced through the very heart, fell lifeless at her husband's side. The shot was meant for him, and not for her; but the bigot-assassin, thinking the deed was done as he intended, made the best of his way off, and though much alarm was felt by the friends of the Currys at their non-appearance, the truth was not suspected, and a labourer going through the lane the next morning came upon Philip sitting on the ground with a scared face, holding his dead wife tenderly in his arms, and saying, 'Hush, she is asleep; don't wake her.'

Help was soon forthcoming, and when the body was lifted from the stiff embrace in which it had lain that night for the last time, poor Philip began to shriek and sob so wildly, and struggle so violently against being led away, that he was taken by force to the house of a kindly farmer who had known him as a boy, and put to bed, where he lay delirious with brain fever for many weeks, but struggled through it at last, as young creatures with sound constitutions usually do, and wake up to face their misery afresh. When health and strength returned he bade farewell not only to his friends, but to old Ireland for ever, and went to London, where he became a curate in a West-end church. Most of his compatriots have a ready flow of words and wit, and he was remarkable for this gift even among his own people; but the graceful play of mirth and humour which sits so well on a Hibernian was burned out of him for ever in the fire of sorrow through which he had unfortunately to pass. His eloquence remained, and had gained a power and pathos which drew crowded congregations to hear him preach, and procured for him more attentions and invitations than he would have cared to accept, had not a kind physician who knew his case urged him to go into society and throw off his grief as much as might be. He was not the sort of man to have recourse to hard work to drown his sorrow; he had no taste for visiting among the poor, and to the end of his days was anything but a model parish priest, though he was kindness itself to all who asked his sympathy or such aid as he could give.

It was not very long before a well-to-do widow, a year or two

older than himself, contrived to show very plainly how much she wished to take charge of him and his comforts, and to provide her little son with a stepfather who would treat him as his own, which she was sure Philip, who was fond of children, would do. The young clergyman had no liking for a lonely life, and offered her a very sincere affection, though he did not pretend that it was even a shadow of his early love.

Being thus provided with a wife and child, that wife lost no time in endeavouring to provide her husband with a living, by coaxing an old uncle with whom she was a great favourite to offer him St. Mary's, Waterton, which was likely to fall vacant before many months were gone, as the then incumbent had had his third stroke of paralysis, and lay hovering between life and death in the pleasant vicarage looking on the river. Never was man more loth to quit a peaceful home; but the last enemy claimed him, and his place was ready for another to fill. The second Mrs. Curry was a good churchwoman as well as a good wife, an ardent admirer of the *Christian Year*, and one who loved to have an object to pursue. St. Mary's, when Philip first preached there, was a dull heavy-looking edifice, not without its good points, as for instance the Gothic arches and general plan of the building, but disfigured with painted wooden galleries of immense depth all the way round, in one of which a bevy of men with stringed instruments reigned supreme. No one who heard it will ever forget their anthem on that first Sunday. The bass-viol groaned, the violins screeched, and the voices trolled out with the utmost animation the benisons of the Psalmist on the man whose olive branches were

'round about, and round about his table.' These allusions, however, fell very flat indeed, for Philip never had a child bound to him by any nearer ties than those of his stepson, George Lovel. The living of St. Mary's was worth 400*l.* a year; Mrs. Curry enjoyed a life income of the same amount under her first husband's will; her present spouse possessed his single hundred; and her boy, if he lived to be one-and-twenty, would be very rich indeed, though if he died before attaining his majority his property would all go to a third cousin on his father's side, who, having a large and hungry family, would very much appreciate any favours that Providence might throw in his way.

The Vicarage was not an expensive house to keep up; it was all on one story, and did not require many servants; the garden contained a few borders of old-fashioned standard flowers, roses, carnations, scabious, and lavender, but for the most part consisted of lawns sloping to the water, so that no regular gardener was wanted; and all things considered the small family kept well within their income and had something to spare, for as there was scarcely any poverty in Waterton, there were but few demands upon them. Every year that Mrs. Curry lived, the more she wished to see the body of the church denuded of its galleries, and at last she prevailed upon her husband to propound his views of what the edifice might be, and to set on foot its restoration. She was sure that from their own resources they could spare at least 200*l.* a year, and then there would be contributions from visitors during both seasons, the sanitary and the hunting one, and perhaps some of the magnates of the neighbourhood might give their names and

their guineas to the good work. Philip, who, partly from early associations and partly from the nature of his own intellect, loved all kinds of beauty, music, bright colours, and fair forms, fell into her ideas, and presented them with all the force of conviction and all the adornments of his eloquence on Easter Sunday to his crowded congregation. 'If,' said he, 'our Father in Heaven has ever told His children in what manner, with what pomp, and what adjuncts He would be worshipped, it was when He gave directions for the fashioning of the tabernacle in the wilderness, for the hangings of blue and purple and scarlet that were to close in the place of His sanctuary, the gold and gems to decorate the breastplate of His priest, and the carved and wreathen work for the vessels of His service.' Very liberally they responded to his appeal and coincided in his plans, and in the course of a few weeks he had money enough in hand to justify him in engaging the services of one of the best architects of the day, who pointed out with enthusiasm the improvements that were needed, and seemed to place himself *en rapport* with the spirits of those who in the elder days of art had conceived the design of St. Mary's, so exquisitely did he propose to carry out every detail that the original lines of the building would allow to be added to or embellished. On two points the vicar was resolute: he had a horror of debt, would only have a small portion done at a time, and would have that finished as far as possible before another bit was touched; and he was equally determined that the works should be carried on in such a manner that divine service should never be interrupted. He was not in the least a Ritualist or a

Tractarian, as would have been said at that time, and had no idea of early celebrations, daily services, and so forth ; while as to the doctrines of Baptismal Regeneration and the Real Presence, he considered them too absurd to occupy the minds of sensible men for a moment. It was wonderful how much was done in a few years ; some rich and pious Americans with whom dollars were plentiful presented an organ ; stained windows were put in in memory of persons who had visited Waterton in quest of health and died there ; an oaken pulpit and reading-desk were given by a lady who had always voted the old three-decker an eyesore ; the galleries disappeared altogether ; the principal physician undertook the restoration of the baptistery, and Lord Cliffe, who was the lay rector, made himself responsible for the chancel. These were great helps, it is true, but the tower had to be under-pinned, and there was an immense amount of repair and strengthening necessary which made no show but was exceedingly costly. Mr. Curry's scruples about getting into debt had long ago been over-ridden by the persuasions of his stepson, who was now at Oxford, and even more enthusiastic about the restoration of St. Mary's than either of his parents, and who promised when he came into his fortune to make good whatever deficit there might be by that time in the funds. The first thing that awoke any ill-feeling was when the chancel was commenced, and it arose on this wise. A churchwarden who had long been in his grave had erected for himself a large and commodious pew in that part of the edifice, in days when people were not nearly so keen on the rights and wrongs of such matters as they are now, and it was occupied by his two

spinster daughters, who thought it as much their own property as their carriage or their four-post bedsteads. Mr. Curry told them it was about to be removed, and offered them seats in another part of the church ; but they scoffed at his politeness, told him they would never give up their rights, and on the Sunday after the demolition of their stronghold appeared in church with an air of calm superiority, carrying each of them a camp-stool, armed with which they marched up to the old place, planted their uncomfortable seats as nearly as possible on the precise spots they had occupied from childhood, and looked defiance at the vicar. The flag of dissension was unfurled ; the old ladies had friends who developed into partisans, and all sorts of bitternesses were freely indulged in. To make things worse, a gouty old Dean, who had had more port wine and popularity than were good for him, was sojourning in Waterton for the winter, and discoursed largely to the small court that gathered round him on the signs of the times, the abomination of the Scarlet Lady, the dangerous teachings of Tract Ninety, and shook his reverend head very ominously when any one mentioned the doings at St. Mary's, accompanied by the oracular sentence, 'I fear very much the introduction of the thin end of the wedge ;' and when pressed to say more, would add, 'I hope I am wrong, but I have my doubts as to whither all this is tending.' Such words coming from such a quarter worked much mischief, and poor Mr. Curry soon began to feel that he had more enemies than friends. Week after week the spinsters mounted guard over their rights, undeterred by the chaos surrounding them, and even when the area within the com-

union rails was extended and brought down to their very feet they did not move an inch, but planted their camp stools and entered their silent protest more firmly and vigorously than ever. Philip wrote to them, and they returned his letter; the architect called on them, and they bowed him out of the house with the loftiest civility. All other courses availing nothing, the vicar at length detailed all the circumstances in a letter to his Bishop, and received the apostolic advice, 'Leave all things till I come.'

As soon as the chancel was finished the prelate did come; and, being hospitably and delightedly entertained at the Vicarage, was eagerly questioned by his hostess as to how he intended to proceed with regard to the camp-stools and their occupants. Not a word, however, would he vouchsafe; and on Sunday morning when he had donned his lawn sleeves and was about to be ushered to his seat by the communion table (the days of processionals as yet were not), the whole congregation saw with consternation the two gaunt gentlewomen march to their accustomed place, and assume a grimmer attitude than ever. The organist played his best voluntary, the Bishop issued from the vestry and entered the chancel, the beadle trod upon the skirt of a black silk dress as he opened the little brazen wicket that would admit his lordship to his seat; but the wise and wary dignitary stopped short, looked at the ladies, turned to the vicar, and in his sonorous voice asked the thrilling question, 'Who are these? Are they lepers that they sit without the gate?'

No more was needed; the sisters gathered their clinging draperies about them, felt in some inexplicable

way that they were honoured by the public notice of the Bishop, and retreated down the church to seats which were at once courteously offered them; the beadle removed their stools, and the service commenced.

It would be wearisome and useless to attempt to follow every step of Mr. Curry's career. There is no doubt that the first few years he spent at Waterton were his happiest and calmest; but they came to a sudden and lamentable close: clouds encompassed him on every side, and he would willingly have lain him down and died rather than have gone through them; but, as a French poet says too truly, 'Man is imperishable in misery.'

George Lovel was within a few weeks of his twentieth birthday, when he over-exerted himself while rowing in the 'Varsity eight' and ruptured a blood-vessel. A college friend came over by the next coach with the tidings, and the anxious mother returned with him to nurse her child. He certainly rallied for a time, and, indeed, recovered so far as to be brought home to the Vicarage, whence he used to walk feebly across to the church leaning on his stepfather's arm, and watch the progress of the works in which he had always taken so vivid an interest. He was an earnest fellow, and the influences then so powerful at Oxford had not been without their effect on him; he wished there were more Church feeling in Mr. Curry, and realised almost for the first time the difference between him and the spiritual directors to whom he had latterly been looking up, and saw that he was not one likely in any way to attach himself to either of the great parties between whom a bitter theological strife was raging, and that he would there-

fore get the worst of it from both sides.

Perhaps there was some hereditary tendency to consumption in the youth; perhaps he was one of those beloved by the gods, and therefore taken from the evil to come; at all events it soon became evident to those who watched him that his days were numbered, and before long he asked the plain question of his mother whether the doctor held out any prospect of his recovery or no.

She was obliged to tell him the truth, and after the first natural regrets at bidding farewell to the life he had found so pleasant, he endeavoured to set his house in order and take leave of earthly things. His first care was to write to the far-away cousin who would come into the property he scarcely dared hope to take possession of, and tell him the promise he had made to Mr. Curry; lay before him the fact that the few thousands required would be little more than a tenth of the whole, and urge him to devote it to the object for which he had so long intended it.

An answer came back after a few days expressing a civil hope that George might, in spite of the doctor's prognostications, live to do as he would with his own; but stating clearly that if that were not the case and the writer inherited his large fortune he should consider it his duty to bestow what he chose to spare on the Evangelical Alliance and Irish Church Missions, and that not a penny of his money would ever go towards the purchase of gewgaws utterly out of place in Protestant churches.

The poor boy was terribly disappointed and deeply distressed at the thought of the evils which he foresaw would come upon the

stepfather who had acted so good and affectionate a part by him from the beginning of the relationship between them.

'Don't fret,' said Philip; 'God will provide; contributions certainly don't come in as they did, but the payments will all be met in time.'

'If I could only live another six months,' sighed George, and checked himself immediately, and took himself to task for not being willing for all God's will towards others as well as towards his own individual self.

Fate was relentlessly cruel to our poor friend. George not only did not live to attain his majority and write the cheque which would have delivered Mr. Curry from the burden of debt, but his mother did not survive him more than a year, and Philip was once more left desolate and alone in the world. He found, too, as most of us do find by the time we reach our meridian, that the said world is utterly devoid of any organisation that might have been supposed capable of doing duty for a heart. As the honoured parent of the heir to large estates, he had enjoyed a goodly amount of consideration; as a man rejoicing in comfortable circumstances, he had had complaisant acquaintances, and even officious friends, for the simple reason that he did not need them.

Now all was changed; poverty came upon him like an armed man, debt and loneliness were his portion, and he writhed under it. Day after day he paced the church-yard path with bowed head, eyes fixed on the ground, and one arm passed behind his back clasping the other, which hung listlessly down as though he *must* take hold of something. He seldom spoke to any one, and if accosted would seem to summon his faculties from

some remote region before he could bring his intelligence to bear on the subject before him. But in all his grief and dejection he invariably gave a kindly word and melancholy smile to Mary Trustlove, as she sat sewing on her lover's grave, and would beg her to go home on wintry days out of the pitiless rain that fell unheeded on his own threadbare coat and shabby hat.

There is a wonderful amount of elasticity in human nature, and as the truth must be told it is necessary to relate that in due course of time Philip took to himself another wife, or rather she took pity on him and allowed him to become her husband. She was a good motherly woman, whose two daughters by a former marriage were happily married and could do without her; and having a modest income and no one but herself to please, she had courage to undertake the management of Waterton Vicarage and its master. Her reign there was but of short duration, for the damps arising from the river settled on a naturally delicate chest, and after brightening poor Philip's life for five or six years, and helping him annually to pay off a modicum of the debts that pressed so heavily upon him, she too departed to the better land.

Curiously enough, neither of his wives had had the power of leaving him even a life interest in any property that might have helped to smooth his path or diminish the difficulties that thickened round him in his declining years. And thus it came to pass that, all alone in a cold world, he fell into utter helplessness, and was taken to the county gaol for debt, whence he emerged at stated intervals to preach sermons that scorched the consciences of some, melted others into tears,

and left the general impression of genius gone astray.

We often say carelessly that 'it will all be one a hundred years hence,' and console ourselves in heaviness with the remembrance that

'Be the day weary or never so long,
At length it ringeth to evensong;

and perhaps Curry did the same. Certain it is that he one Sunday morning left his prison, and walked the three miles to his church, fainted during the prayers, was carried into the pulpit, and there spoke a few words which showed that the lamp of the spirit had well-nigh consumed the frail frame, and then some kind man took pity and drove him in a fly to the place whence he came. His soul was delivered from bondage before another Sabbath came, and the Father who knew whereof he was made, and how respectable society treats those of whom it is not worthy, put an end to his sorrows by the seal of death.

He was buried with George Lovel and his mother and the third wife, and there sleeps calm, after life's fitful fever.

Those who go into his late church wonder how it is that exquisite workmanship jostles squallid mediocrity, why the unmended roof drips and is damp-stained just above the beautiful pulpit, and why there is so much litter of rubbish round about. Perhaps it may be cleared away and the structure completed some day. Meanwhile Mary Trustlove, a gray dishevelled woman, wanders through the graveyard, wondering in her own simple way that no one greets her either in her walks or at her solitary vigil by the turfy grave; and if any one mentions the late vicar it is to tell strangers that he was a 'queer cracked man, who had three wives, and died in Swanswick gaol.'

NAVAL BRIGADES.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

In following the story of the war in Zululand, many of us with anxious hearts, we saw in each detail of operations reported by the correspondent some notice of the Naval Brigades serving on shore with the army; and as they have now returned to their ships, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to know how it is that our bluejackets come to serve side by side with soldiers, and what state of preparation a man-of-war is in ordinarily if called on to land her men. How is it that they, being sailors, are able at all to take their places as artillery and infantry, for not only by the correspondent's accounts have they done so, but have been noticed for their steadiness under fire, coming up to the standard of 'old soldiers'?

Although we have a large seafaring population, and many sailors in these islands, a fact which is well known to every one, yet that particular class of men who follow the sea as a calling in a man-of-war are less known to the generality of our countrymen than any other body under the crown. A bluejacket, as a man-of-war sailor is called, is rarely seen, with the exception of the few ports where there are royal dockyards or training ships. In comparison with our soldiers they are numerically few, there being only about 30,000 bluejackets, of which not more than one-fourth are in England. We are convinced that the mass of ordinary English people have no idea how those few bluejackets, on whom practically the safety of the coun-

try itself depends, are prepared to protect it. Only now and then in this maritime country of ours, odd to say, is attention turned to the Royal Navy, its officers, bluejackets, or marines; and then when anything is said about it, two things are generally apparent: one, great ignorance of the subject, which is bad for those who want information; and the other, fulsome praise of the Royal Navy and all that pertains to it, which is bad for those belonging to it.

The Royal Navy of England, from our insular position, numerous colonies, small home production, large manufactures, and consequent intercourse with all other countries of the world, has to undertake more different sorts of work than any other service under the crown; and those belonging to it must expect to have many calls made on them by her Majesty's representatives abroad. These calls may or may not be responded to; the responsibility of action rests with the naval officer, who has to decide in each case according to its circumstances.

The service of the navy in the first place is on the sea, and to all that pertains to warfare on the sea should every one belonging to it turn his attention. The sea is kept free from marauders by the navies of the world. The moment a ship is declared 'pirate,' every man-of-war may attack her irrespective of nationality, so that travellers and merchandise may proceed in safety from place to place. In maritime war, fleets must be prepared to meet fleets,

single ships engage in duels, privateers must be captured, and the enemy's commerce driven off the sea; his coast must be so guarded that nothing can be landed for use, and on any weak point parties must be landed to destroy stores likely to be useful; our island must be so protected that our merchant ships can go in and out of our ports with safety, and no descent, not even from a single ship, of the enemy be made. All this is the outline of purely maritime work. To fit the navy to undertake it, a multitude of things have to be taught and certain weapons provided, and it is from this teaching that when calls are made for bluejackets to be landed with rifles, guns, or rockets, although for a service quite distinct from that in which they have been brought up, both officers and men have been found so ready and able to undertake the work assigned to them.

A bluejacket, after being a seaman, must become a seaman-gunner, a rating of which each man-of-war has a large number. To be this he must understand how to work and fight a heavy gun, under all circumstances, of a ship at sea; for a heavy gun as much belongs to a bluejacket as a rifle to a linesman, or a horse to a trooper. The heavy gun will only serve for ship-work itself; but a part of all fighting on the sea being boat service, to enable a bluejacket to attack an enemy or defend himself in a boat, he must know how to use and fight with a boat's gun, a Gatling gun, rockets, rifle, sword-bayonet, pistol, torpedo, gun-cotton, and electrical machines.

To work a boat's gun or a Gatling, nothing new has to be taught; for rockets, pistol, torpedo, gun-cotton, and electrical machines, there must be some special training, every man-of-war having

some men who understand the use and manipulation of each. But to use the rifle and sword-bayonet, since every bluejacket may be in a boat either as one of the crew or as a specialist, he must be taught sword drill and rifle exercise, with musketry instruction. His sailor requirements have therefore taken him up to the point where he has been supplied with and taught the use of the same weapons as an artillerist and a linesman.

As the sea is the great highway for all nations with a sea-board, so their navies are the police on it, having charge of their countrymen who reside in foreign possessions, and protecting those who travel to and fro. In this way a man-of-war takes the place of a solitary policeman on his beat, her armament and crew being looked on in the light of his truncheon; and officers and men must be prepared to do their police duty. As this consists very often in being called on to land, to attack, or guard some place, the question naturally arises, what steps are taken in our men-of-war to provide for such contingencies, and how far are they ready to act?

Every man-of-war carries a party of men, Royal Marines, few or many, according to the size of the ship, who are the only men on board trained as regular soldiers, ready and fit to land for any warlike operations; but as the number of these men is always small, and the bluejackets have the same weapon, and may be wanted on shore also, they are formed into one or more companies according to their number, and company drill takes its place in the regular teaching of a man-of-war's man. Here, then, we have each Royal ship carrying a body of highly-trained and superior soldiers, the marines, and a body of slightly trained make-shift sol-

ders, the bluejackets. Bluejackets know all about the working of guns—field gun-carriages are supplied—and a party of men are easily trained as a field-gun's crew, dragging the gun in lieu of using horses. Some ships have two field carriages, all ships one; the gun used being a nine-pounder. Then haversacks are supplied, pioneer tools find their way on board, and pioneers get organised. Then the men's belts get fitted so as to allow of a blanket containing certain necessaries in its roll being attached; and always, as there is an improvement in infantry arms, the sailors—when the improved weapon has been decided on—have been furnished with it. Muskets have been supplied to the navy from time immemorial, changed to rifles as that arm was introduced; cutlasses also; but we find that it was not until 1836 that field guns and carriages were first issued, haversacks in 1840, and pioneer tools in 1864; the belts have been altered from time to time, and we understand there is now under consideration the matter of the supply to the navy of regular landing accoutrements for bluejackets, including leggings, water-bottles, and some good way of carrying the shift of clothing that is required; but this has yet to come.

Rockets having been in use in the navy since 1833, the handling of them is well known and understood, so that if in a small war a rocket battery is wanted, bluejackets can always work it; and though happening on shore, it may be looked on as a part of their regular business. We therefore find company drill and field-gun exercise have been taught our bluejackets for years, and as they have been found to understand the simple movements easily, when ships have been gathered together

and there happened to be a naval spirit in authority with a turn for soldiering, the men have been at intervals organised with battalions and batteries, and landed for drill, until now these things have become a regular part of a bluejacket's training; and as a source from which the required knowledge should come, the navy has two schools, one at Portsmouth and the other at Devonport, called the 'Gunnery Establishments.' Men are specially instructed there in all these points, getting extra pay according to their proficiency, and being drafted in bodies to every ship as gunnery instructors and seaman-gunners, so that for any shore operation a man-of-war contains all the elements that may be required to prepare the men: discipline, instructors, arms, most of the equipments, and stores. Having got these, and with the past history of naval service on shore as a guide, when a ship leaves England for service abroad, her officers have to begin preparations for training the men so as to be ready to meet any calls that may be made on them.

It must be understood that in the first place the ship herself is made ready by exercise for a sea fight, and then that her boats are prepared and exercised for all boat-work. After this comes the preparation for what may be called purely naval work, that which commonly happens. A tribe or barbarous nation has committed some atrocity on whites, and must be punished; the flag has been insulted, and an apology has to be made; some fighting between opposite parties is going on in some town where there are British subjects and British property which have to be protected; or some ally, whom we are bound by treaty to assist, is being threatened by an enemy. Each of these cases means

that the bluejackets and marines are almost sure to be landed under cover of the ship's guns, which guns must be kept sufficiently manned so as to be serviceable. Therefore the first company of bluejackets organised will be those men who make up the boats' crews, each man of which, with the exception of the bowmen and coxswains, is armed with a rifle and sword-bayonet. Large ironclads give two companies of about 43 men each, or one large company of 86 men, and the boat parties of marines in another company of about 36 men—a total of 122 men, exclusive of officers, who are also taken from amongst the boat officers; the guns of the ship being left capable of being worked with diminished crews, so that each gun's crew should have amongst it a certain number of boats' crews, if possible no two men in the same boat. The company or companies should be organised complete, the carpenters belonging to the boats making the pioneer party; the coxswains and bowmen, under a couple of officers, remain in charge of the boats as a beach-party; the seamen-gunners from the boats' guns are the marksmen and supernumeraries to each company; the armourers and signal-men from the stretcher party; no spare ammunition is carried; the men have their supply with them; the boats must be kept ready for a retreat, with the guns prepared to cover it. If an expedition of this sort requires a field gun it must be specially put in the boats, the gun's crew going with it; and if the expedition is for the purpose of burning any stores or houses, an incendiary party from the ship must also be specially detailed according to the circumstances of each case.

The number of rifles supplied to ships, being in excess of what

is wanted to arm the boats' crews, are issued to other men of the crew, who are taught the use of the arm, for rifle firing takes a part in any sea-fight, and as bluejackets may be wanted for service on shore the men so armed are formed into other companies; giving two more of some 50 men each, and making up the boats' crews companies with some spare men to the same number, so that an ironclad has some 200 small-arm men, bluejackets, ready for landing, which with her marines, perhaps 80 men, is the infantry that can be supplied.

As to the marines, it may be worthy of note that no regiment of the Guards or line can boast of finer men or better soldiers. As inhabitants of an island with many dependencies, we would call them superior soldiers to any others, for two reasons, their long service and adaptability of transport. They are always ready, and their naval training teaches them to stow closer and better than any other soldier; and as in any war our soldiers must cross the sea, it is the marines who are best fitted to be sent first.

Every man-of-war being supplied with one, and sometimes two, field gun-carriages—for one, a gun is supplied, for the extra one a boat's gun is taken—so field-guns' crews are organised and taught, 19 men to each gun. To this latterly has been added the machine, or Gatling gun, which we have heard of as playing its part in Zululand by bluejackets. It has a crew of 19 men. All these guns' crews are armed with cutlass and revolver pistol. We can now see what an ironclad has ordinarily ready for service on shore if required; the men come under the term of 'landing parties,' having a special bugle call; 4 companies of bluejackets, 200 men; one of

marines, 80 men; two field guns, and Gatling guns crew, 57 men; 4 pioneers, 12 in the stretcher party, 17 to carry the spare ammunition, 4 for medical stores, 3 armourers, 4 signalmen, 4 buglers, and 20 officers, making a total of 405. In a corvette, which may be taken as the smallest ship with complete landing parties, there would be 2 small-arm companies of 112 men, one company of marines of 25 men, 1 field gun's crew of 19 men, 1 Gatling gun's crew of 19 men, 2 pioneers, 10 in the stretcher party, 9 to carry the spare ammunition, 3 with medical stores, 1 armourer, 2 signalmen, 3 buglers, and 10 officers, a total of 215. All other ships in the navy, with the exception of the very small ones, are ready with the same divisions and parties of men, the numbers varying between the two totals according to their size; and we can assure our readers that in every man-of-war, all that pertains to the landing parties is always ready, the stores, ammunition, arms, &c., in their place, so that they can leave the ship at short notice.

A man-of-war, therefore, on being put 'in commission,' that is having all its officers and men on board, prepares at once for purely naval service. After that may come infantry instruction, what amount is required to prepare bluejackets for any extraneous service that may be required of them on shore. In the *Sailor's Pocket-Book*, by Captain Bedford, R.N., we find skirmishing laid down as of the first importance. In addition to that the company should know how to wheel, form fours to either flank, form to the front or rear, and when perfect in this it is practically efficient. As to battalion drill, all parade movements may be dismissed, and a few sections of the battalion instruc-

tions are all that is necessary to know. It must be remembered that a great deal of a soldier's drill is the means of teaching him discipline; but that is not necessary for a bluejacket: he is taught it by other forms, though the discipline must be the same.

Besides the drill, there is the internal economy of the landing parties required, which should commence as soon as a ship is in commission. To make this complete as far as possible three things are wanted at present, but a complete equipment will shortly be provided: Water-bottles, leggings, and boots; boots are carried on board and can be issued when wanted. Leggings must be made; duck may answer, but thin canvas will be better. If leather leggings can be got, it should be done. For water-bottles, an embargo should be laid on all empty soda-water bottles, none being allowed to be thrown overboard. Our troops in India use them covered with leather, and in a man-of-war they can be 'grafted' over, a canvas sling made, with a canvas cup, and kept white. Having settled on and provided the things that are not supplied by the service, the next thing is to have clear what clothes the men should wear and take with them if landed. On this point comes a difficulty at once, that is the head-dress, the white hat of our bluejackets being wholly and totally unsuited for a hot sun, so that the cap must be prepared with a white cover and fall for the back of the neck; and referring again to Captain Bedford's book we find the following list of clothes laid down as necessary for a man to wear and take on shore with him. They will wear serge jumper and trousers, flannel, comforter, pair of stockings, boots, cap, shirt, knife and lanyard, and handkerchief. They will carry

rifle, accoutrements, sword and bayonet, &c., 60 rounds of ammunition, and blanket, rolled up in which there is to be a shirt, pair of stockings, and towel. It is in this way, and for the reasons we have stated, that our bluejackets are able to take their place on shore by the side of our soldiers ; but the question always arises for those in naval authority to decide, when and under what circumstances their men ought to be landed. In purely naval affairs there is no difficulty ; the thing to be done must be done promptly ; the ship is the base of operations ; there can be no transport, so not more than two days' provisions can be taken ; the men must bivouac. It is altogether, as far as arrangements are concerned, within the man - of - war's man's province, and should therefore go easily. The same thing applies to a fort or town being held under the ship's guns ; no transport is required, and the men can be provisioned from the ship as well as if they lived on board ; but as a rule for the Royal Navy, no shore operations should be undertaken by officers or men unless it comes under the head of purely naval affairs, those connected with the peace and care of civilised communities on the different coasts about the world. The navy has nothing to do with any diplomatic or military display or expedition when it is inland ; and in spite of the success which has always attended our bluejackets and marines in any war in which they have assisted, the naval authorities should always set their face against their men being landed for service of any sort on shore. Service in the Royal Navy means service on the sea, where our forefathers have left us a goodly heritage ; and disappointing as it might be to see active service

going on quite close and yet take no part in it, it is better to keep men to their *métier* than to let them be mixed up in that of which they can know but little. For when sailors are landed they must be inferior soldiers, which will certainly not make them better sailors. Although we say bluejackets and marines should not be landed except for purely naval work, there may arise occasions when just the reverse holds good, and nothing practically that a man-of-war has belonging to her should be kept on board. Men, arms, ammunition, stores, provisions, everything should be landed ; we allude to such cases as the Indian mutiny, the New Zealand wars, the commencement of the Ashantee war, and the Zulu war after the Isandula disaster. In the first and last the safety of the Indian Empire and the Natal Colony depended on as many Englishmen as possible being got together to make a stand. Her Majesty's ships Shannon and Pearl went to Calcutta, diverted from their proper duty ; and her Majesty's ship Shah on her way to England, when at St. Helena, turned round and proceeded to the Cape. In both these cases, the ships landed all available men for useful work.

When necessities of this sort arise, the ship or ships are able to land every man for whom arms can be found. Before leaving the ship, the light spars should be sent down from aloft and all sails unbent and stowed away except enough to render the ship safe in a gale of wind. The engine-room establishment should be reduced to its lowest numbers, just capable of working the machinery and driving the ship. The navigating officer, one medical officer, and as few other officers as possible should be left on board, with

enough men to weigh the anchor and make sail as if she were a merchant ship, slowly and piece by piece. The provisions and ammunition for the men landed can be stored, and if necessary any guns or stores that may be required by the military can be parted with. The ship can become a transport and be sent elsewhere for more men; in fact, it should be, as it always has been, the pride of the Royal Navy that there is no limit as to what it places at the disposal of the Governor or General, as the case may be, to save further disaster. The Shannon, in the Indian mutiny, not only landed some of her eight-inch guns, but her artisans, when they were supplied with materials, made the carriages for them, and those guns were at Lucknow. Such things can only be done, it must be remembered, if the war is such that naval operations are out of the question, where there is no coast on which the enemy can be harassed or diverted from the main attack, no towns or stores of supplies that can be destroyed from the sea, where there is no doubt but that the operations must be purely military, and that our territory or the lives of our countrymen are in imminent danger. Then, as was the case in Zululand, we see what a ready service is the Royal Navy, and we find the bluejackets able to take their place in the field as infantry and artillery with good results. But there always comes a time when their services, good as they may be, should cease; and as soon as the danger is over, or the soldiers sent out arrive, then the naval authorities have to say their men must come back to their proper work, however useful they may have been found, and all should return to their ships. It should

be remarked that in any war the navy can probably assist if there is any boat work over rivers, and would do so though it had its own work to do. A few men only are required, and could be spared even with maritime operations to be conducted at the same time.

The naval brigades in Zululand were not a new feature of naval life, as there has scarcely been any war of any sort in which we have been engaged during this century but what some call has been made on and responded to by the Royal Navy. The old war at the beginning of the century was purely on the sea, and yet in that the sailors were at times landed; but having established our supremacy on the sea, and with the long general peace only broken by the Crimean war since, there has been no sea fighting; but in all the little wars we have had in hand, we find the bluejackets and marines on shore helping their brethren in arms. In Burmah, in 1824 and 1852, all the boat service naturally fell to the sailors' lot, but they were also landed as infantry. In Syria, in 1840, we find them assisting at the assault of Acre. In China, in 1841, 1857, 1859, and 1860, we find them in companies and battalions, and with field guns, to say nothing of the river transport. In the Kaffir war of 1851, the marines only were landed, the bluejackets doing the landing work through the surf of a bar river. In the Crimea, the marines of the ships were formed into a battalion; but the bluejackets served in the trenches as part of the siege train. In the Indian mutiny bluejackets and marines served together, the former as infantry and artillery. In the New Zealand wars of 1844, 1845, 1860, and 1862, the bluejackets and marines were landed as infantry, and with field guns

and rockets. In Abyssinia the bluejackets were formed into a rocket battery. In Ashantee, the marines were formed into a battalion, and the bluejackets served as infantry. In the Perak war we find them on shore as artillery and infantry; and we have had them in Zululand as infantry, field and garrison artillery, and working the transport across the Tugela. These services have all been undertaken in connection with regular troops; but at the same time the other services on shore, purely naval, which have had to be undertaken by the navy alone, have been legion. In almost all parts of the world occasions have arisen which have necessitated the landing from one or more ships of an armed party, sometimes for a few hours, at others for some time; hence we see that naval brigades may at any time be formed, that the men and ships are prepared for such service, and that as yet when called on to act as soldiers, except cavalry and horse artillery, they have been found fit for the work. But it must not be supposed that the navy produces soldiers to compare with those who are regularly trained; for with the exception of the marines, who stand *nulli secundus*, it cannot be so, nor is it expected of the men. But a sailor's life gives powers of adaptability; a bluejacket is accustomed to obey orders, and to the use of arms of all sorts; therefore he fits in well to anything that may be required

of him, and being intelligent soon learns new duties. The worst is the bluejacket likes campaigning, as indeed does everyone, though all hate war, so that he soon becomes very useful, and in many cases is kept on shore when he ought to be back in his ship; but it is a fault that must be condoned, though we would wish he was always kept for ship's work. However, the praise he gets is very great; all people are kind to him, correspondents patronise him perhaps too much, and there is invariably a strong approval of his behaviour and services put in orders by the general when he leaves, which testifies to his usefulness.

The French navy, which is perhaps more organised than the English navy, carries out the soldier arrangements for the sailors to a great extent, and we followed with some pride their discipline and gallantry in the Franco-German war. Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, one of their leading officers, has said, 'Though I above all things hold to our proper rôle of seamen, I have not the less constantly protested against the opinions of those who despise our landing parties. It would be indeed lamentable if the 5000 or 6000 picked men of a fleet were not always capable of executing a simple reconnaissance, *coup-de-main*, or short expedition.' This opinion is, we think, borne out by the services of bluejackets when serving in naval brigades.

CROSS-PURPOSES.

ABOUT three quarters of an hour after crossing the bridge of Kehl, on the Baden side of the railway from Paris to Frankfort, the traveller arrives at the small but not unimportant station of Appenweier. From here he may, if he elect to abandon the direct route, be transported by means of a branch line to Freiburg and Basle; or, by taking his seat in a nondescript vehicle, half diligence, half omnibus, awaiting his pleasure at the door of the adjoining restaurant, penetrate into the recesses of the Black Forest, and at the close of an up-and-down-hill journey of two hours through a delightfully picturesque country, be safely landed at whichever of the rival bath establishments he may choose to honour with his preference, Petersthal or Griesbach.

It was to the last-named locality that, on a broiling July afternoon, a year or two before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, a family party, consisting of father, mother, and daughter, voluntary martyrs in a closely packed second-class carriage, were journeying from the neighbouring town of Carlsruhe, with the usual velocity of an ordinary German train. Herr Kanzleirath Piepenhagen, the chief of this little band of pleasure-seekers, was a stout middle-sized personage, considerably on the shady side of fifty, with small twinkling eyes, and a complexion bordering on the cadaverous; he wore a black alpaca coat and waistcoat, gray trousers of some cheap native fabric, much too short for him, and a straw

hat with a very broad brim; and on his knee reposed a green carpet-bag, emblazoned with a sprawling 'Gute Reise,' worked in worsted of divers colours.

His wife, sitting immediately opposite to him, was a sharp-featured, swallow-cheeked, beetle-browed dame, whose age might have been anything over forty, and whose general aspect bore a striking resemblance to that of Mrs. Pipchin, as delineated by 'Phiz'; her long lean fingers were busily engaged in the national exercise of knitting, and as if to prove that this occupation was purely manual, and in no degree monopolised her attention, she found leisure, without relapsing into inactivity, to address sundry acrimonious remarks to her liege lord with reference to her sufferings from heat, dust, flies, and other incidental grievances (for all of which, collectively and individually, she evidently held him responsible), and to reply in a less acrid tone to an occasional observation of Fräulein Piepenhagen, ensconced in the corner beside her.

Had Lavater himself been placed face to face with the damsel in question, we doubt whether he would have divined the possibility of any relationship between the particularly unattractive couple whose personal appearance we have endeavoured to depict, and the pretty and graceful girl whose prepossessing exterior, in spite of the ill-fitting cotton-dress and the flaming red shawl from the maternal wardrobe which constituted her travelling costume, contrasted so strangely with the Dutch tum-

bler-like unwieldiness of the Kanzleirath, and the stiff ungainly *tournure* of her lady mother. Frau-lein Bertha had soft blue eyes, and a profusion of chestnut hair which, in defiance of the prevailing fashion, she wore in ringlets; her figure was slight, but exquisitely proportioned, and her tiny and well-shaped hands, encased, we regret to say, in a pair of yellow thread gloves, might have served as a model for Houbigant or Boivin. So much for the *physique* of our heroine; when we add that she was of an amiable disposition, tolerably accomplished, and not altogether deficient in that tinge of sentimental peculiarity to the maidens of the Fatherland, we shall have described her with sufficient accuracy.

The longest and most tedious journey—even on a German railway—comes sooner or later to an end; after divers halts at Rastad^e, Oos, Achern, and other intervening villages, the train at length slowly neared the station of Apfenweier, and the Kanzleirath, who had been enjoying a fitful repose for the last quarter of an hour, received intimation of the fact by means of a sharp application of his wife's parasol on the calf of his leg.

'Herr je!' he exclaimed, starting up, and flattening his straw hat by coming in contact with the top of the carriage. 'What's the matter?' he added, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles.

'Tickets ready!' sternly replied the Kanzleirathin, 'and don't be all day about it.'

Before many minutes had elapsed the party were duly installed in the interior of the Eilwagen; the luggage was securely packed on the roof, and the driver had already gathered up his reins preparatory to starting, when an individual in a fustian jacket, re-

presenting alternately the waiter, boots, and ostler of the establishment, signalled to him to stop.

'Don't be in a hurry, Schwager,' he said; 'there's another passenger going with you.'

He had hardly finished speaking, when a young man, dressed in a suit of light-coloured tweed, and carrying a small portmanteau in his hand, emerged from the open door of the restaurant, and, glancing carelessly as he passed at the family trio inside the vehicle, took his seat on the coachbox, lit a cigar, and threw a piece of money to the expectant waiter.

'Danke schön, Herr Baron,' shouted that functionary, as the Eilwagen slowly rolled away.

When they were fairly in motion, the Kanzleirathin gave her husband a nudge with her elbow.

'Did you hear that?' she inquired.

'Hear what?' murmured her spouse in a provokingly indifferent and drowsy tone.

'Nein!' exclaimed the indignant lady, 'das ist zu stark! As I live, the man's half asleep again!'

'I heard, mother,' interposed Bertha, anxious to prevent any further discussion; 'the waiter said, Herr Baron. Do you suppose he is going to Griesbach, or only to Petersthal?'

'To Griesbach, of course,' replied Frau Kunigunde decisively, with a look worthy of her imposing name. 'No one who has any pretensions to good society would think of staying at such a hole as Petersthal.' (It is probable that, had the Kanzleirathin been bound to Petersthal, she would have said the same of Griesbach, but this by the way.)

'I wonder if he is really a Baron?' continued her daughter in a low whisper.

'Baron! pooh, nonsense!' growled Herr Piepenhagen, who, being at that moment sorely harassed by a persistent blue-bottle, had overheard the remark, 'waiters will call any one Baron for six kreutzers.'

'Idiot!' muttered his lady wife, with a contemptuous shrug of the shoulder; after which display of conjugal endearment she relapsed into a haughty silence, which lasted with few interruptions until they reached the much-calumniated Petersthal.

To the great delight of at least two of his fellow-travellers, the stranger manifested no present intention of taking up his quarters at the *pension*, at the door of which the conductor of the *Eil-wagen* made a short halt, on the chance of securing a stray recruit or so for the remaining portion of his journey. No such volunteer, however, putting in an appearance, and the 'Herr Baron,' who had descended from his perch for the purpose of holding a brief conference with the landlord, with whom he was evidently well acquainted, having reascended to his seat, the ponderous vehicle resumed its course anew, and in little more than half an hour finally deposited its weary passengers at the hospitable portals of Herr Jockerst, proprietor of the establishment at Griesbach.

While the Piepenhagen family are reposing after their fatigue in the clean but sparingly furnished dormitories luckily reserved for them, every other nook and corner in the house, with the exception of a diminutive cell about the size of a Calais steamer deck-cabin, also retained for their travelling companion, being already occupied, it may not be amiss to describe as succinctly as possible the *locale* of our story. The three

baths, Rippoldsau, Petersthal, and Griesbach, form a species of triangle of which the latter is the farthest point; it is almost entirely encircled by a range of thickly-wooded hills, intersected by winding paths, and affording at various artistically contrived openings agreeably diversified views over the surrounding country. The large straggling building under the direction of Herr Jockerst may be considered not merely as part and parcel of Griesbach, but as Griesbach itself; inasmuch as, barring a scattered group of neighbouring cottages, it stands completely alone, and is absolutely monarch of all it surveys. Its architecture may be in some respects amenable to criticism, as having no distinct character of its own, and leading one to suppose that the wings and out-buildings had been added to the original structure at subsequent intervals, as a means of satisfying the increasing demand for accommodation; but that this most desirable end has been successfully attained there can be no manner of doubt. The portion of the interior devoted to the requirements of the guests consists, besides the sleeping apartments, of a spacious and lofty hall used indiscriminately as dining- and drawing-room; and here, in accordance with the primitive habits of the place, the visitors are wont to assemble after supper, and listen to the combined efforts of half-a-dozen musicians attached to the *pension*, whose services are rewarded by a fixed charge inserted as a separate item in the weekly bills.

The baths, the main object of most frequenters of this secluded spot, are disposed in subterranean chambers like cellars in the immediate vicinity of the spring; and in the rear of the premises is

a pleasure garden, abounding in shady walks and sequestered nooks, equally suitable for repose or flirtation. When we have added that the ordinary society of the *pension* Jockerst is mainly composed of families from the adjacent towns of Carlsruhe, Stuttgart, Heidelberg, and Mannheim, attracted thither either by motives of health or economy, we shall have given a tolerably exact idea of the establishment into which our travellers are on the point of being introduced. And be it here parenthetically observed that had not Herr Piepenhagen, whose official salary barely averaged twelve hundred florins, or something like a hundred a year, been recently honoured by a supplementary gratification of two hundred florins, as a special mark of grand-ducal favour, he and his belongings might have sighed in vain for an opportunity of exchanging the dusty, sultry atmosphere of the Residenz for the pine-clad heights and fresh mountain breezes of Griesbach.

As soon as the first sounds of the bell summoning the guests to their evening meal were heard, a general rush took place for the purpose of inspecting the names of the new arrivals, already recorded as follows in the Fremden-Buch :

‘Herr Kanzleirath Piepenhagen, with wife and daughter, from Carlsruhe.’

‘Heinrich Rosenberg, from Worms.’

‘Then he is not a baron after all,’ whispered the disappointed Bertha to her mother, as they were adjourning to the supper-room.

‘Who knows, child?’ replied the stately dame. ‘Kings often travel *incognito*, and why shouldn’t barons?’

‘Rosenberg’s a pretty name, at any rate,’ said Bertha.

Whatever might be his social position, it soon became evident that Herr Heinrich Rosenberg was unanimously voted a decided acquisition to the little Griesbach colony. In the first place, he was remarkably good-looking,—*ce qui ne gâte rien*—and had (at least the ladies said so, and if they didn’t know, who should?) a peculiarly aristocratic air, and a bewitchingly fascinating smile; besides, he talked French *almost* without accent, and was always prepared with a choice fund of anecdotes adapted to every variety of hearers, upon which he drew largely for the entertainment of his neighbours at the supper-table. With Herr Jockerst he seemed as entirely at his ease as with the rival autocrat at Petersthal, and displayed so intimate an acquaintance with rare vintages, that on his casually alluding to a certain Liebfrauenmilch carefully stowed away in the cellars of the *pension*, which he affirmed to be unrivalled, more than one old gentleman felt unable to resist the temptation, and, deferring to the judgment of so enlightened a connoisseur, ordered up a bottle forthwith.

Meanwhile the Kanzleirath was in the seventh heaven, having discovered among the guests an associate of his youthful days, once the wildest Bursch in the university of Heidelberg, and now a physician with a fair amount of practice at Stuttgart. Dr. Schlosser and his charming daughter Wilhelmina, familiarly called Mina, a sparkling brunette of eighteen, had been for some years in the habit of passing their summers at Griesbach, and were consequently treated by its proprietor with a degree of respect seldom accorded to mere chance visitors; the place of honour at the public table being invariably reserved for the doctor, while the most

desirable bachelors present were monopolised as a matter of course by his pretty companion. Thus it happened that Herr Rosenberg naturally found himself seated between Fräulein Mina and the no less attractive Bertha, who was already on the best of terms with the Stuttgart beauty. Nor was Frau Kunigunde in any way disposed to disturb the universal harmony, being wholly engrossed by the conversation of a congenial spirit in the shape of a hook-nosed and spectacled maiden of eight-and-forty, one of her especial intimates at Carlsruhe. Fräulein Ulrica Bitterzung, irreverently termed by the incorrigible Mina *eine alte Schachtel*—in plain English, an old hag—was not only the main prop and pillar of that fearful institution, the afternoon *Kaffee Gesellschaft*, of which our ‘five-o’clock tea’ is a feeble and comparatively harmless imitation, but as inveterate a scandal-monger and reputation-destroyer as could be met with from one German frontier to another. ‘From early morn to dewy eve’—or as long as daylight lasted—she would sit at her ground-floor window, on the outside of which a mirror was so cunningly fixed as to reflect for the good lady’s recreation, and in a kind of panoramic procession, whoever chanced to pass up or down the street, and afford her, moreover, an inquisitorial peep into the doings of her opposite neighbours. It may be imagined, therefore, with what undisguised rapture the worthy spinster, who had been located at Griesbach for upwards of a fortnight, and who felt her tongue growing rusty from sheer want of exercise, was inclined to welcome the advent of so accomplished a retailer of tittle-tattle as the Kanzleiräthin; and were we to describe their first interview as ‘a character dead at

every word,’ it is possible that we should not be far wrong.

On the removal of the supper-table, the younger members of the company assembled together by common consent at the end of the hall occasionally appropriated to dancing; the musicians struck up a lively measure, and if Herr Rosenberg had previously created a favourable impression by his good looks and captivating manner, it was increased a hundred-fold by the grace and lightness of his waltzing, which was pronounced to be perfectly Viennese. Devoting himself alternately to the *piquante* Mina and the sentimental Bertha, as the only votaries of Terpsichore present worthy of his notice, he profited by each pause in the giddy whirl to whisper soft nothings in his partner’s ear, and then plunged anew into the intricacies of the *deux temps*, until the very fiddlers, being fairly exhausted, struck work, and the party broke up.

It must be acknowledged that the ordinary mode of life adopted by the frequenters of Griesbach is strictly primitive and hygienic, and holds forth little inducement to the lovers of gaiety and dissipation. The early breakfast, the baths and the prescribed regimen of the waters, the one-o’clock dinner, and the evening meal succeed each other day after day with uniform regularity; while the out-door amusements are chiefly confined to a stroll in the garden or an occasional ramble on the adjoining hills. It necessarily follows, therefore, that the guests, being thrown more or less on their own resources, are disposed to be mutually sociable, and that the customary ceremonies of introduction are to a certain extent, if not altogether, dispensed with; it being of course understood that

acquaintance thus commenced *n'engage à rien*, and may be dropped *ad libitum* on any future meeting by either party concerned. This facility of intercourse, combined with his own personal qualities, may in some measure account for the exceptional popularity enjoyed by Herr Rosenberg almost from the very instant of his arrival ; but it is only fair to add that he did his best to deserve it, and strove by every means in his power to render himself generally agreeable. He was always the first to propose some new excursion or to start some topic of conversation likely to interest his hearers. He could talk politics with the old, and descant on the last literary or theatrical novelty with the young ; nay, he pushed his complaisance so far as to win Fräulein Bitterzung's heart by confiding to her private ear divers slightly unorthodox anecdotes (invented on the spur of the moment), which that estimable dame carefully stored up in her memory for the edification of her intimates in the Residenz. In a word he became so universal a favourite that whenever, as frequently happened, he paid a flying visit, on the plea of urgent business, to Petersthal or Rippoldsau (though what business he could possibly have at either place puzzled the society extremely), his return was looked forward to with as much anxiety as if the welfare of the entire community depended on it.

'I can't imagine what takes him away so often,' said the Kanzleirath, during one of these absences to his friend Schlosser ; 'the Grand Duchess isn't at Rippoldsau just now, and there can't be a soul worth speaking to at the other place.'

'Bah !' remarked the doctor ; 'I'll wager there's a sweetheart in

the case. Young men will be young men, you know.'

Herr Jockerst, who was standing by, smiled significantly, but said nothing.

We strongly suspect, however, that neither Fräulein Piepenhagen nor her merry companion, had they been present at the time, would have refrained from indignantly protesting against so monstrous a supposition, as an unwarrantable insult to the fair ladies of Griesbach in general, and their own pretty selves in particular. Each of them being thoroughly convinced that she alone was the magnet capable of inducing the handsome stranger to prolong his stay in so uncongenial a desert—for he was notoriously sceptical as to the medicinal virtues of the baths, and steadfastly declined even to taste the waters—they would have ridiculed, as it doubtless merited, the idea of an equally potent counter-attraction existing elsewhere. Not that either had in reality any proof positive that she was the exclusive object of his preference, his attentions having been hitherto confined to those vague and indefinite gallantries which may mean a great deal or nothing ; but the language of the eye has a peculiar eloquence, and they both fancied, rightly or wrongly, that he only awaited a favourable opportunity to express the feelings which his admiring glances had already (in their opinion) sufficiently manifested.

As far as Fräulein Schlosser was concerned, this state of things might have lasted *ad infinitum*, the damsel being as yet completely heart-whole, and a dead hand at flirtation into the bargain ; looking upon matrimony as an eventuality to be postponed as long as practicable, but not the less determined to hold her own against all comers and at all hazards,

whenever circumstances should render the sacrifice necessary.

With Bertha the case was more serious; she had neither the worldly experience nor the prudential foresight of Mina, but was too apt, in love matters especially, to follow the dictates of her own susceptible nature and attribute perhaps an undue importance to what M. de Talleyrand appropriately characterises as 'first impressions.' Since the day of her *rencontre* with the supposed Baron at Appenweier and their simultaneous arrival at Griebach, she had allowed her imagination to indulge in certain visionary and ultra-romantic fancies, of which he was of course the hero and she as inevitably the heroine; and had ascribed to every chance word or look subsequently addressed to her by Heinrich Rosenberg a signification, which she flattered herself, not without reason, no one else could by any possibility have divined. Her conviction that he was not what he pretended to be was strengthened by the oracular decision of Frau Kunigunde, who, having once made up her mind that he must be a nobleman in disguise, would not have abandoned her darling theory for an empire; more particularly as her husband was of a contrary way of thinking. It was, indeed, mainly in a spirit of opposition to that gentleman that she had complacently encouraged her daughter's evident predilection for their former fellow-traveller, hoping thereby to put a stop to a proposed arrangement which had been frequently talked of previous to their leaving Carlsruhe.

The Kanzleirath's salary being, as before stated, extremely moderate, and his private fortune *nil*, the discovery of a suitable *parti* for Bertha had naturally become an object of paramount impor-

tance; and an opportunity had lately presented itself, which, if not in all respects satisfactory, was too advantageous to be rejected without due consideration. Herr Schneegans, or, to give him his full official title, Herr Unter-Assessor-Substitut Schneegans, a promising young bachelor of eight-and-thirty or thereabouts, deriving a fair income from his post, and enjoying moreover a comfortable independence of his own, had for some time held a prominent position among the admirers of Fräulein Piepenhagen, and in a recent interview with her father had declared his intentions and wishes in the most unequivocal manner. Now had the offer been made in the first instance to the Kanzleirath, it is more than probable that she would have jumped at it, and the consent of Bertha, as the principal party concerned, being taken for granted, the course of Herr Schneegans's love would have run as smoothly as he could have desired; but her ideas on the subject not having been consulted, she felt it her bounden duty, if not to impose an absolute veto, at least to throw as much cold water on the project as she conveniently could. 'For,' as she shrewdly remarked to her inseparable *confidante*, Fräulein Bitterzung, 'an assessor is no great catch after all, and the young man here *may* mean something. If the worst comes to the worst, we can always fall back on Herr Schneegans.'

Whether the young man alluded to meant anything or not, it is certain that he had no objection to officiate as cavalier in ordinary to two such attractive damsels as Bertha and Mina; and even the latter, careless and light-hearted as she was, could not help feeling flattered by the homage which, to do him justice, he dis-

tributed to one and the other with the strictest impartiality. We may judge, then, of their feelings when one night after supper, during a pause in the conversation, he quietly announced his departure for Frankfort on the ensuing afternoon. Had a thunderbolt fallen among the assembled company, they could hardly have been more startled ; protests against so unexpected a desertion arose from all parts of the hall, and every argument that could be urged to induce him to prolong his stay was tried, but in vain. Business, he said, must be attended to ; he had already outstayed his time, and despite his reluctance to tear himself away from so agreeable a society, there was no help for it, and go he must. Rising as he spoke, with the pretext of necessary correspondence as a reason for his withdrawal, but in reality anxious to escape further importunities, he left the room, and repaired to the private apartment of Herr Jockerst, with whom he remained closeted until the other guests had retired to rest.

'Bring him to book to-morrow before he starts,' whispered Frau Kunigunde to her daughter, as they separated at the doors of their respective bedrooms.

Poor Bertha smiled faintly, and said she would do her best.

On the following morning after breakfast, profiting by a momentary absence of her friend Mina, Fräulein Piepenhagen slipped unnoticed into the garden at the back of the house, and established herself and her embroidery-frame on a bench commanding a good view of the *pension*. She had not been there long when the sound of footsteps hastily approaching on the gravelled path caught her ear, and in another instant Heinrich Rosenberg was at her side.

'Pardon me, Fräulein,' he began, 'for thus intruding on your solitude, but I could not quit Griesbach without expressing my deep regret to those in whose society I have passed so many happy hours, and to none more sincerely, more truly, than yourself. My minutes are counted, but before I go I must see and speak with the Herr Kanzleirath ; I have a request to make, which I hope and believe he will grant, in which case one of the principal objects of my stay will have been attained. As I trust ere long to have an opportunity of visiting Carlsruhe, I will not say adieu, but *auf Wiederschen*.'

With these words, and a lingering glance at the blushing maiden, whose emotion had prevented her from uttering a syllable in reply, he lifted his hat respectfully, and hurried down the alley by which he had arrived, leaving Bertha in a state of agitation easier to imagine than to describe. How long she remained absorbed in her reflections—very pleasant ones apparently—she knew not ; but after a while she felt a gentle hand on her shoulder, and looking up beheld Fräulein Schlosser, all smiles and good humour, but seemingly more excited than usual.

'What is the matter, mein Schatz ?' asked Mina. 'I have been searching for you everywhere, for I have a bit of news that will surprise you. He is gone to speak to papa.'

'I know he is,' replied Bertha in a low voice. 'He told me so himself.'

'Told *you* !' echoed Mina, staring with astonishment ; 'what could he be thinking of ?'

It was now Bertha's turn to stare.

'Why shouldn't he tell me that he was going to ask papa's consent ?' she said.



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'Did he say that?' inquired Mina, rather sharply.

'Not those very words,' answered Bertha; 'but of course that is what he meant.'

'Then, *meine liebe*, you must have misunderstood him. It was *my* papa he alluded to, not yours. I have it from his own lips; he called him Herr Doctor.'

'To me he said Herr Kanzleirath,' retorted the other.

'I can't make it out,' said Mina, 'unless the man's a Turk, and wants to marry us both. Come with me; my father and yours are playing chess in the little arbour yonder, and I can't rest till I know who is right.'

So saying the impetuous young lady darted off at a rapid pace, followed by Bertha, in the direction of the snug retreat where the two old gentlemen were comfortably enjoying their game.

'Is Herr Rosenberg gone, papa?' was Mina's first question, when they arrived quite out of breath.

'Gone!' exclaimed the doctor. 'Yes; a quarter of an hour ago. He wouldn't wait for the omnibus, but borrowed Jockerst's gig, as he wanted to catch the early train.'

'Did he ask you anything before he went?'

'How curious you are this morning, puss!' laughingly replied Herr Schlosser. 'Well, if you must know, he did ask me something.'

'And what answer did you give him?'

'I told him I had no particular objection.'

'There, you see!' cried Mina, with a triumphant look at Bertha. 'Didn't I tell you so?'

At this moment Frau Kunigunde and Fräulein Bitterzung, who had been strolling down an adjoining walk, approached the group.

'But surely, papa,' said Bertha to the Kanzleirath, 'he asked *you* something too!'

'So he did, my dear,' answered her father.

'And you told him?'

'I told him I was much obliged, but that he had better try somebody else.'

'You said *that*, Gottlieb,' interposed his wife in her deepest and most impressive tragedy tone, 'when your child's happiness is at stake?'

'My child's happiness!' repeated the bewildered Kanzleirath. 'What has she to do with it?'

'Did he not ask you to consent to his marriage with Bertha?' she continued.

At this question Dr. Schlosser, who had been staring at one and the other alternately, burst into a sudden fit of laughter, and even the unfortunate Kanzleirath ventured on a feeble smile.

'He asked me to allow him to send me a couple of casks of Liebfrauenmilch,' said the latter, and I thought it too dear. Schlosser has ordered one, but then he can afford it, and I can't.'

'Either you must have lost your senses, or I mine,' disdainfully remarked Frau Kunigunde. 'Perhaps you will kindly inform me who *is* Herr Rosenberg?'

'Neither more nor less than the travelling agent of Propf & Keller, wine merchants at Worms,' replied the doctor, stifling his merriment as well as he was able. 'I could have told you that a week ago, if you had asked me. And all I can say is, if what he sends me is equal to the sample we tasted the other evening, I sha'n't complain.'

'His daughter will hardly be of the same opinion,' whispered Fräulein Bitterzung in her friend's ear; 'unless, like Bertha, she has a Schneegans to fall back upon!'

NOVEMBER.

THE brown leaves lie a hundred deep,
The bare boughs toss their arms on high ;
There is a cold look in the sky,
And fierce winds o'er the woodlands sweep.

At eventide the valleys fill
With mist, that does not pass away ;
The drizzling rain falls all the day,
And patters on the window-sill.

A dismal dampness haunts the morn,
A dewy coldness fills the e'en ;
The sun behind a veil is seen,
And all the mountains look forlorn.

The trout in sulky waters lie,
The grouse are wild upon the moor ;
The beauty of the ling is o'er,
And barren acres meet the eye.

At night the stars look weirdly bright,
And meteors cross the frosty sky
And vanish, ere the startled eye
Hath time to mark their trail of light.

The dormouse sings his farewell song
Before he seeks his winter rest ;
The wild doves come with crimson breast,
And o'er the wheaten stubbles throng.

The daisy, in some sheltered place,
Looks up more meekly to the light ;
And all fair Nature shows the blight
November lays upon her face.

J. T. B. W.

A BETTING EXPERIENCE.

I HAD often been asked by my friend Bernard Snipe to take an interest in horse-racing—or rather in betting. For months I had resisted tempting offers of assistance and advice which were to make my fortune. The fact is, I knew nothing whatever about horse-racing, and I had no money to spare to pay for a practical experience of the 'art' of betting. Bernard Snipe had, on the other hand, made a study of 'book-making.' He was the deputy station-master at an old borough town on one of the chief lines in the kingdom. He betted with passengers and he betted with railway clerks, and for a time he 'skinned' them pretty much as he pleased.

It was in September 1861 that he prevailed upon me to go to Doncaster to see the Great St. Leger race. I consented to visit the famous course more for the sake of the 'sight' than for the betting. However, in order to enjoy a little of everything, I put three pounds ten into my pocket; and on the Wednesday when the Leger was run for, I was conveyed in a special train to Doncaster. My railway fare and dinner absorbed ten shillings of my cash, and with the remaining three pounds I proceeded to the course. I remember seeing the first race won by Count Lagrange's Cosmopolite. I saw large sums of money change hands, and I at last thought I might win a ten-pound note on the Leger. I looked round for Bernard Snipe, but he had left me. I could not find him, though I searched everywhere for him. I returned to the quarters occupied by the betting

fraternity, and I could hear the praises of Kettledrum sounded above all the rest of the horses. Kettledrum was the favourite in the betting, and consequently I made him my favourite by investing all my three pounds in his cause. At length the horses came out for their preliminary 'canter.' Kettledrum was pointed out to me, and I almost worshipped the animal. 'They're off!' was the first cry I heard; and after considerable excitement there were immense cries of 'Caller Ou wins! Caller Ou wins!' and to my utter astonishment Caller Ou did win. The thought suddenly flashed upon me that I was eighty miles away from home, had lost the only friend I knew, and had not a farthing in my pocket towards paying my railway fare. I was in a strange place; I was almost in despair. I wandered about the refreshment booths to ascertain if any one I knew was there. I was not successful. I recalled the days of my boyhood, when I begged sixpence from my father on a fifth of November. In the evening he asked me what I had done with the money.

'Spent it in fireworks,' was my reply.

'What, spent it in sparks! A fool and his money soon parted.'

I came to the conclusion that I had once more made a fool of myself by visiting Doncaster, and a still greater fool of myself by staking three pounds on the lottery of a horse-race, and leaving myself without the means of getting home.

Suddenly I was tapped on the shoulder. I turned round, and to my delight I beheld Bernard Snipe.

'Well, how have you gone on?' he asked.

'Lost every farthing of my money,' was my disconsolate reply.

'What did you back?' he inquired.

'Kettledrum.'

'Kettledrum! What a fool you've been! Why didn't you ask me about it? He wasn't in the race. The rain had made the course too heavy for him,' run on critical Bernard.

'It's all very well to tell me these things now the mischief is done,' I remarked. 'I know I've made a fool of myself by coming here at all. Lend me half a sovereign and I'll make the first loss the last, and go home by the next train.'

'Not me, old boy,' he replied; and then, in an encouraging tone, he said, 'Look here; they're betting 8 to 1 against Cosmopolite for the Corporation Plate. I am going to put two sovereigns on it. If you like to put a sovereign on it, I'll lend you the money.'

'No, no; once bitten twice shy,' I answered. 'Cosmopolite won the first race, and they'll never let the same horse win two races in one day.'

'It's right, I tell you. I have a friend in Count Lagrange's stable, and he has given me the "tip,"' put in Bernard.

'Well, I'll never pay you back if I lose,' I informed him.

'I'll trust you for that,' he remarked, as he ran off towards a betting-man who was under a huge umbrella bawling to a crowd of people in front of him.

Presently he returned and handed to me a small ticket, at the same time informing me that if the horse won I must present the ticket to the man with the umbrella, and he would hand me nine sovereigns.

The bell rung to clear the course. Again there was the preliminary canter. Once more a score of voices from behind field-glasses cried out, 'They're off!' I became fearfully excited; but when I heard shouts from all sides that 'Cosmopolite wins!' I scarcely knew how to control my delight. Cosmopolite did win. I was the first individual who accosted the man with the umbrella, and having presented the ticket he handed me nine sovereigns. At about the same moment, Bernard Snipe came up and received eighteen sovereigns. I returned him the sovereign he had advanced for me, and at once darted into the middle of the crowd. He called after me; but I would not heed him. I ran as fast as a race-horse to the railway-station. In a quarter of an hour I was on my return journey home. I called to see a friend at a large town in the Midlands, and I ordered a new suit of clothes and a hat. I paid cash, and received the usual discount. In another hour I was at home with just the same amount of money in my pocket as I had started with in the morning.

In my new suit I was married in about a month afterwards.

Whilst I was enjoying the honeymoon, I received a letter from a friend. In it I read the following passage:

'Bernard Snipe, through his love for betting, has become involved. He has embezzled 360*l.* belonging to the railway company, and bolted to Australia.'

Then I related the above story to my bride.

'You'll never bet again, will you?' she asked, as she patted me on the cheek.

'Never, my dear!' And I have kept my word. W. H. H.

LOST AND MISSING.

AMONGST the many curious phases of human existence, none are invested with a greater degree of interest than those which relate to the occasional disappearance of society's units, and which deal with the circumstances attending their absence from the circle or sphere in which they have lived and moved. Statisticians tell us that a surprising number of individuals disappear mysteriously each year from the circle of their acquaintance; and police records similarly inform us of the large proportion of such cases in which no clue is obtained to the whereabouts or existence of missing men and women. Indeed, from all accounts it seems a tolerably easy matter to get lost beyond recognition or finding; and the annals of detective science are no better prepared with an answer to the query about missing persons than ordinary society would be to reply to the familiar question, 'What becomes of the pins?' It will be understood that we are referring to those cases of inexplicable disappearance in which no adequate reason can be assigned, in the first instance at any rate, for the mystery of absence. True, as we shall presently note, this mystery may be explained in the plainest but saddest fashion by the discovery of the missing body; although, as the sequel will show, the records of medical jurisprudence teem with examples where in the identity of the lost individual becomes a matter of the gravest doubt and uncertainty. And thus we note that amongst the unwonted phases of human

life there stand forth prominently those in which, first, a case of disappearance gives rise to the vain search or to the discovery of the missing body, and in which, secondly, science appears to assist in the work of identification—this latter being in many cases a difficult and sometimes a hopeless labour, impeded, as we shall see, by the grim and even ludicrous force of circumstances. The well-worn adage that 'truth is stranger than fiction' finds nowhere a better illustration than in the histories stored up in the note-book of the medical jurist. And the notice-boards of a police-station may in their own way furnish the imagination with a more fertile field than has yet been encompassed by the most facile pen of a Hugo or a Sue.

Allusion has just been made to the difficulty experienced in the work of identification, even by the most intimate relations and friends of the missing person. Many examples of this difficulty may be cited; the indefinite nature of the task arising probably as much from the alteration in appearance produced by the 'chilly hand' which sets the features in repose, as from any other cause. The lapse of a few hours after death may effect grave change in the cast or *pose* of the human face, as every doctor knows; and police authorities who have to do with the identification of the dead as well as of the living are accustomed to receive with justifiable care and caution the statements made by most persons in cases of disputed identity.

A comparatively short time ago an instance of this fact was afforded in a northern city. The body of a woman of dissolute habits was found under circumstances which rendered the theory of her having been murdered an extremely probable hypothesis. The question naturally arose as to the name and identity of the victim. Several persons were found ready to declare that the body in question was no other than that of M. N., with whom they had daily associated. Interrogated closely upon this point, they still adhered to the exact statement they had made; and their opinion was supported by at least one fact, namely, that M. N. had not been seen in her usual haunts for some days prior to the discovery of the body. Identification in this case seemed to be little short of a certainty, when it occurred to a shrewd police-officer to make assurance doubly sure by visiting the city-prison, with the view of ascertaining whether the person in question might not be incarcerated within its walls. His search was duly rewarded by the discovery that M. N. was there undergoing a short term of imprisonment, ignorant of the circumstances under which, like some notabilities of our day, she was credited with being 'with the majority' whilst still alive and well. A suggestion gravely made in connection with this case, that the body was that of a certain person A. B., was indignantly refuted by A. B. herself walking into the police-station and confronting her anxious friends.

But the apparent impossibility of identifying even near relations may be aptly illustrated by a reference to a case decided in the Vice-Chancellor's Court so recently as 1866. This latter was a

suit in which the plaintiffs, Holliss, wished to establish the death of a person named William Turner. Turner was last seen alive on the 7th of May 1865, when he was entertained at Guildford. He then presented an emaciated appearance; his mind was unsettled and weak; he was unshaven and suffering from boils and sores, which were dressed at the last-named place. On the 17th of May a drowned body was found in the river Wey, and at the inquest, which was summoned on the 17th, two men named Etherington swore to the corpse as that of their father, who was missing at the period in question. The friends who had entertained Turner at Guildford, on the other hand, declared their belief that the body was that of William Turner; but it was nevertheless duly interred as that of Philip Etherington. On the neck of the drowned man a coloured neckerchief was found; this article assisting in the ultimate identification of the body, which was effected some months afterwards, on Philip Etherington, the supposed drowned subject, walking into his daughter's house. The question who was the drowned man was then revived. The proofs were clearly brought out at last. William Turner had left behind him at Guildford a fragment of a handkerchief; this fragment being found to correspond exactly with the article removed from the neck of the drowned body, and the fact that the sores of William Turner had been dressed at Guildford, recalled to mind the fact that similar traces of disease were discernible on the drowned man. To the Vice-Chancellor's mind the chain of evidence was complete and satisfactory, and judgment was given establishing the identity of

William Turner and the drowned man. Yet the two sons of Etherington were positive as to the identity of the body with their father, who in his turn must have remained utterly ignorant during his absence from home concerning the quandary into which that absence had led his friends and others.

The medical jurist would inform us that the common notion that the human body rapidly decomposes in water is contrary to fact. Especially in winter, and if the body remains below the surface, are the structures well preserved. Identification may therefore be tolerably easy, when otherwise free from embarrassing circumstances, in cases of drowning taking place in winter, and even after some weeks have elapsed. It may also, in some cases, be of positive importance, either as an aid to identification, or for other purposes, to fix accurately the date of the death of an individual. Such a case was tried at the Warwick assizes in 1805, where a suit was entered by the relatives of a drowned man to annul a commission of bankruptcy on the ground that, being already drowned when the commission was issued, it was void in law, and the creditors would therefore have no power to seize the property of the deceased. The drowned man was last seen alive on the 3d of November; the commission was taken out a few days after this date, and on the 12th of December his body was discovered in a river. Five weeks and four days had therefore elapsed between his departure from home and the discovery of the body. No doubt was cast upon the identification in this case, and the question before the court turned upon the date of death by drowning. How could the date be fixed? Nature

in this case afforded a means of at least approximating to the date in question. As part of the chemical changes which the human body undergoes in the course of its decomposition in water or in damp soil, a peculiar substance called *adipocere* is formed. This substance is, in fact, a kind of soap, ascertained to result from the union of the fatty acids of the body with the ammonia also derived therefrom; and when thus converted into adipocere the body may retain its condition for lengthened periods of time. The Warwickshire case of the drowned bankrupt exhibited in part the chemical changes resulting in the production of adipocere, and the natural question, how long does this substance take to form, came to be raised. Medical evidence adduced at the trial tended to show that a period of about six weeks was, at the very least, necessary for the production of adipocere, whilst a very much longer period was required, as a rule. This evidence tended naturally to cause the jury to extend as far as possible, and as far as was consistent with facts, the time the body had lain in the water; an opinion which led to a verdict for the plaintiff, carrying with it the statement that deceased must have been dead during the whole period of nearly six weeks.

Perhaps no chapter in the grim romance of life presents events of more fascinating and mysterious kind than that containing the records of scientific speculation regarding the nature of human remains, which are occasionally brought to light as the first, and it may be the only, witnesses of a grave crime. Here science and the criminal officer go hand-in-hand, to ferret out the dead secrets of crime often with an ingenuity worthy a Vidocq, and with the calculating mind and balancing

theories of a Poe. Nor is the mysterious in crime unrelieved by touches of humour, and sometimes of even ludicrous perplexity. In 1838 the authorities at the Mansion House were concerned over the supposed discovery of a human hand in a City dust-bin—the said relic of humanity proving, after medical examination, to be merely the fin of a turtle, which had doubtless perished in a manner well understood in the halls of judicial examination. The thigh-bone of a horse or ox has, ere now, also formed the subject of grave inquiry, until the doubts of law and justice were duly solved by an appeal to the comparative anatomist.

More astounding, because absolutely true, and in the highest degree perplexing as illustrating the curious and remarkable coincidences of human life, are cases in which a confusion of identity, and even of name, may assist in blindfolding justice in the most singular and bewildering fashion. In December 1831 a woman named Elizabeth Ross was tried at the Old Bailey for the murder of an Irishwoman named Caroline Walsh. After much solicitation on the part of Ross and her husband, Walsh had consented to live with them, and, on the evening of the 19th of August 1831, the deceased went to the residence of Ross in Goodman's Fields, taking with her as her belongings a bed and a basket. The latter contained the tapes and other odds and ends which Walsh was accustomed to sell by way of earning a scanty livelihood. All traces of Caroline Walsh disappeared on the evening of August 19th, and when Ross was interrogated respecting her visitor and lodger, she at first replied in an unsatisfactory fashion; but ultimately stated that Walsh had left her

house on the 19th, and that nothing had been heard of her lodger since. Circumstances, however, came to the knowledge of the police, which resulted in Ross being duly arraigned for the murder of Caroline Walsh, and it was proved by the testimony of Ross's son that his mother had suffocated Walsh on the evening of August 19th, and had disposed of her body for anatomical purposes.

Now appears, however, a most singular element in the case. On the evening of August 20th an old woman, giving her name as Caroline Welsh, was found lying in the neighbourhood of Goodman's Fields in a state of squalor and filth, and was duly conveyed to the London Hospital. There it was discovered that she had sustained a fracture of the hip, and after a few days' residence in the hospital the patient died and was duly interred. At the trial it was argued on behalf of Ross that the Caroline Welsh of the London Hospital was in reality her late lodger; and hence it became important to settle the marvellous identity which had thus arisen between the missing lodger and the hospital patient. The former, as has been stated, was an Irishwoman; but so also was Caroline Welsh. It was found out, however, that Caroline Walsh came from Kilkenny, whilst the hospital patient hailed from Waterford.

This first point of difference was speedily followed by the discovery of other distinctions fatal to the prisoner's case. Caroline Walsh was described as being about eighty-four years of age, tall, of a pale complexion, and had gray hair. Caroline Welsh, who died in hospital, was about sixty years of age; she was also tall, but was of dark complexion. Further, Caroline Walsh was cleanly in person,

and exhibited no defect in physical conformation. Caroline Welsh was dirty and emaciated, and her feet were so covered with corns and bunions as to present the appearance of being deformed. In dress, however, the two women were very much alike; and more curious still, both possessed baskets of similar make, that of Welsh having a cover, which the basket of Walsh wanted.

It may be said that, with the evidence as to the difference between the women in question, and with positive evidence as to the death of Walsh, little doubt could have existed as to the identity of each. But the confused identity of name, dress, and occupation was effectually set at rest by one remarkable observation, namely, that Caroline Walsh, the murdered woman, was known to possess very perfect front teeth; a fact sufficiently remarkable in a woman of her age to attract the attention even of unscientific observers. Now Caroline Welsh was found to possess no front teeth, and the medical evidence given at the trial proved that the sockets of the front teeth had been obliterated in the hospital patient for a very lengthened period. This latter difference between Caroline Walsh and Caroline Welsh was too typical to be combated by the ingenuity of counsel and by the circumstances which favoured the prisoner's defence; and Elizabeth Ross was found guilty, and duly executed for her crime. It formed a notable fact of this inquiry, that the body of Caroline Walsh was never discovered, although the London dissecting-rooms were duly searched. But the case against Ross was rendered the more conclusive when the grand-daughters of Caroline Walsh, on being shown the remains of Welsh, distinctly al-

leged that the body was not that of their relative.

The difficulty of exactly identifying the remains of a particular person after mutilation has been added to the crime of murder, has unfortunately been more than once fully illustrated by some of the most prominent crimes of recent years. Several historical instances exist, all unfamiliar to the present generation, in which the triumph of science over crime has been signally illustrated. The case of Eugene Aram has formed subject-matter for poem and story, it is true; but the exact details of the crime for which Aram suffered are by no means perfectly or generally understood. Aram was born at Ramskill, Yorkshire, in 1704. Settling at Knaresborough as a schoolmaster, he became acquainted with Daniel Clark, a shoemaker, who was possessed of certain valuables, and who was alleged to have been murdered by Aram and another. Clark disappeared in February 1745, and Aram was shortly thereafter arrested on suspicion of having been concerned in his disappearance, but was acquitted from want of evidence. Eventually, Aram became usher at Lynn Academy, Norfolk, and whilst there engaged his accomplice confessed that certain bones discovered in a cave near Knaresborough in 1758 were those of Daniel Clark. Aram was brought to trial at York in 1759. In his elaborate defence he laid great stress on the difficulties besetting the identification of human remains after such an interval as had elapsed since Clark's death. His pleas in defence were founded on the alleged impossibility of determining the exact nature, sex, and other particulars regarding a skeleton after the lapse of many years. The fracture of the temporal bone found in the

skeleton proved nothing, for was it not probable that the cave may have been a place of burial in olden times, and that the injury might have been produced after death in the spoliation to which graves were frequently subjected? These and like pleas Aram urged in his defence with singular ability; but the confession of his accomplice and the facts of the case overruled his pleas, and he was found guilty and executed, having previously confessed his crime; whilst with strange philosophy he wrote a defence of suicide, and endeavoured practically to defeat justice by carrying his theories into effect.

Two very marked cases in which the lost and missing were the subjects of legal and scientific examination have occurred within the memory of every reader of middle age. These cases are the Parkman tragedy of America, and the famous Waterloo Bridge murder amongst ourselves. Both cases illustrate very typically, not merely the difficulties which beset the question of identification, but also the aid which science may afford in deciding the fate of the lost and missing.

Dr. Parkman, a Boston (U.S.) physician of standing, was traced, on the 23d of November 1849, to the laboratory of a Professor Webster, a lecturer on chemistry of that city. Thereafter all traces of Dr. Parkman were lost, and the excitement regarding his fate became intense. It would appear that certain pecuniary transactions had taken place between the two persons just named, and that Webster was considerably in Parkman's debt, and was, moreover, in embarrassed circumstances. On Webster's laboratory and its precincts being searched, the haunch-bones, the right thigh, and the left leg of a human body were

discovered. Associated with these remains were several laboratory towels bearing Webster's name. In the refuse and slag of a chemical furnace were found fragments of bones of the skull and of the spine-bones, along with the blocks of artificial teeth and a little melted gold. A further search in the laboratory brought to light a tea-chest in which, disposed among tan, and covered over with mineral matters, the trunk of a human body along with the left thigh were contained. These latter parts and the parts previously discovered were found to belong to one and the same body. Pieced together, these relics showed that they formed part of a body of which the head, arms, and hands, both feet, and the right leg from the knee to the ankle were missing, but which at the same time corresponded with the frame of the missing man in every particular. Dr. Parkman, at the time of his disappearance, was sixty years of age. The examination of the skeleton pointed to its being the remains of a man of about the age referred to. Parkman's height was 5 ft. 11 in., and the skeleton pieced out and proportionately measured was found to indicate a height of 5 ft. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. In these points, therefore, the identity of the remains seemed to be clearly shown. But, as in the case of Caroline Walsh, there were special points in Dr. Parkman's case which served to place the identification well-nigh beyond a doubt. It was quite evident that an attempt to destroy the head by fire had not only been made, but had well-nigh succeeded. The evidence of Dr. Kepp, the missing man's dentist, came to the rescue in a very remarkable fashion, after an examination of the remains of the artificial teeth which had escaped the action of Web-

ster's furnace. Keep's evidence was, that four years before the disappearance of Dr. Parkman he fitted artificial teeth in blocks for that gentleman in both upper and lower jaws. The dentist could also speak with certainty to seeing these teeth in Dr. Parkman's mouth about a fortnight before his disappearance, when he had fitted the teeth with new spring. The artificial teeth rescued from Webster's furnace were sworn to by Keep as those he had made for Dr. Parkman from their fitting the moulds in which the teeth of the latter had been made, and from peculiarities of make. The left side of the lower jaw of Dr. Parkman exhibited a certain irregularity, which was recognised by Keep in the form of the gold plates recovered from the furnace of Webster. Other circumstances combined to weave the evidence strongly around the latter as the perpetrator of a heinous crime. That the remains had not been used for anatomical purposes was abundantly proven by medical evidence; and that murder had been committed was evident from an examination of the chest, which revealed a wound on the left side. Webster was duly convicted by a chain of circumstantial evidence of the most complete kind, and was executed. As an eminent authority in matters medico-legal has remarked on the Parkman tragedy, the refinements and appliances of science may fail in the attempt to destroy a body, or so to mutilate it as to prevent its identification.

Better known from its occurrence in the teeming metropolis of the world, and from the unsolved mystery which still enshrouds the deed, is the Waterloo Bridge murder. A carpet-bag was discovered on a buttress of Waterloo Bridge, London, in the beginning

of October 1857. On being examined, this bag was found to contain portions of a human frame, which had been so treated as to present a veritable illustration of the disposition of Cassim Baba by the robbers in the *Forty Thieves*. In all, some twenty-three portions of the frame were discovered, these being parts of one and the same body. The portions missing were the head, the greater part of the spine, the hands, feet, and left side of the chest; whilst the internal organs were also wanting. The questions submitted to the medical inspectors for the guidance of the police in the investigation of the crime had reference to the sex, age, and height of the deceased; the cause of death; the period which had elapsed between the occurrence of death and the finding of the remains; the state of the body as indicative of its having formed the subject of anatomical research or not; and the presence of any peculiarity, normal or acquired; the discovery of which might lead towards the identification of the body.

These queries were on the whole answered with an accuracy and fulness which bespoke volumes for the patience and skill of the medical inspectors. The remains were those of a man who, judging from the full development of the skeleton, must have attained the age of between thirty and forty years, and must have measured about five feet nine inches in height. The person was probably dark haired, judging from the colour of the hair of the wrists and knee. The cause of death was plainly apparent. A stab had been inflicted between the third and fourth ribs on the left side of the chest, and in such a situation as to have penetrated the heart, whilst the appearance of the wound led the inspectors to de-

clare that it must have been inflicted during life, or immediately after death ; the former alternative being that most consistent with the facts of the case. The cause of death was, therefore, seen to be perfectly consistent with the theory of murder, and that of a very deliberate type. Equally important for the purposes of the detective was it to fix the probable date of the commission of the crime ; but on such a point speculative rather than actual evidence alone could be offered. It was noticed that, from the perfect state of preservation of the remains, they must have undergone some preservative process, probably with the view of preventing discovery through their decomposition. They must, in fact, have been boiled and salted, and this latter feature alone may serve to indicate the cold-blooded and deliberate nature of the crime. The fact that the remains had thus been artificially preserved rendered the calculation of the period of death difficult, and in any case uncertain. But from an examination of those portions of the remains which were least affected by the process of preservation, the examiners came to the conclusion that the person might have been dead for three or four weeks prior to their examination of the remains ; or, in other words, that the subject of the Waterloo-Bridge murder was probably alive in the latter part of September, or even at the beginning of October, 1857.

Not a particle of evidence was forthcoming to show that the remains had been used for anatomical purposes. On the contrary, the manner in which the parts had been separated, and the clumsy fashion in which parts which could have been readily disjointed with the scalpel were separated with

the saw, proved the murderer to have been thoroughly ignorant of the veriest rudiments of anatomical knowledge. But the practice of the public in frequently rushing to the conclusion that mutilation must of necessity be the work of the medical student, is founded upon an entire want of appreciation of the labour and nicety involved in anatomical study ; whilst such a supposition can only favour the escape of a criminal, by distracting attention from the true state of matters, and by thus affording him time and opportunity for escape. In the case of the notorious Greenacre, who in 1837 murdered a woman named Brown in London, and scattered her remains, clumsily separated, as in the Waterloo-Bridge murder, public opinion at first attributed the circumstances to the absurd and unfeeling levity of medical students ; and justice was thus impeded, as it was likewise hindered for a time in the case of Dr. Parkman, by a similar supposition. In neither instance could anatomical study have been made the excuse for the appearance of the remains, and still less so in the Waterloo-Bridge tragedy.

In the latter case no peculiarities of structure existed which could have been singled out with a view to the identification of their possessor ; and hence, owing largely to the want of this particular kind of evidence—the kind of testimony which tells most favourably in the hands of the detective—the Waterloo-Bridge tragedy, in all its ghastly details, has tacitly passed into the limbo reserved for the undiscovered horrors of our own and other ages. Not a single direct clue was forthcoming as to this mysterious crime. The articles of clothing found in the bag afforded no certain evi-

dence of the nationality of their possessor. They were torn, and stained with blood ; and a very distinct stab must have been inflicted through the double collar of an overcoat, this injury probably being of an equally fatal nature with the stab already spoken of as having been inflicted in the chest. The police inquiries appeared to point to the shifting maritime population of the Thames as the most likely source in which a clue to the mystery should be sought. A Swedish sailor was believed to have been the victim ; but there were not wanting those who thought then, and think even now, that the crime was of deeper nature than that indicated by the hypothesis of a seaman's quarrel. The care shown in the disposition of the remains was said to be inconsistent with the unskilled ways of sailors, and pointed, along with the circumstances of the death, rather to the revenge of more accomplished assassins. The fate of Count Fosco in Wilkie Collins's *Woman in White* is thus believed to have been that of the victim whose remains came to rest on Waterloo Bridge in 1857. The fact of the deceased having probably been a foreigner, and possibly being in hiding in London from his enemies—or the latter theory of the crime having been one of political revenge—may account for the want of success which met the efforts of the police in tracing his identity. Of the true history of this great crime will the world perchance hear something at some future date, or will it remain for ever buried in the oblivion of mystery ? Who can tell ?

The presence of peculiarities of various kinds in the bodies of persons who are lost or missing is, as has just been remarked, often of the utmost value in identifying

their remains. A case in point occurred in Scotland, where a skeleton was disinterred from a sandy seashore, an examination of the remains being duly ordered by the authorities. In the course of the investigation the medical examiners discovered that the lower portion of the spine was diseased, and from the nature of the lesion they were enabled to state that the individual in question must have walked with a marked peculiarity of gait. This clue, patiently followed up, showed that the skeleton was that of a carter, who had been deformed, and who was buried at night in the sand by his friends to avoid the chances of his body being stolen for anatomical purposes by the 'resurrectionists' of his day. A similar case is related by Orfila, the celebrated continental expert, in which a man named Bonino, residing near Montpellier, suddenly disappeared in 1823. In 1826 certain suspicions attaching to the disappearance induced the authorities to examine the garden of one Dimont, with the result of discovering the bones of a human body. Bonino was well known to have laboured under a six-fingered deformity in the right hand, and to have possessed six toes on the left foot. The two smaller toes of the left foot were missing in the otherwise perfect skeleton ; but on the fifth toe a surface or hollow, to which an additional toe could have been attached, was plainly discernible. In the right hand the bones of the sixth finger were absent, but the palm-bone supporting the little finger exhibited the appearance of having given support to an extra digit. The left hand and right foot were complete and entire. This evidence, supported by collateral circumstances, told against Dimont and a woman, his partner in the

crime, and both suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

The list of cases in which medical science, aided by the practised and trained common sense of experts, has elucidated many of the apparently inexplicable problems and mysteries of crime, might be indefinitely prolonged. But it may be remarked that not merely in the case of the lost and missing dead does the knowledge of the expert aid the cause of justice. It may happen that in cases involving the identification of the living the final appeal is made to the medical jurist and to scientific knowledge, in deciding upon the changes of structure or appearance which may accompany and mark the varying epochs of human life. Cases have been recorded in which the examination or mere detection of a scar has settled the vexed question of identity, and has freed an innocent man from the perils of unmerited punishment. Such an instance occurred at the Old Bailey in 1834. A man, believed to possess the name of Stuart, was charged with being a returned convict, and with having escaped from transportation. Evidence was given that in 1817 a person of that name was convicted and sentenced. The governor of the gaol in which the convict Stuart was confined testified to the identity of the prisoner at the bar with the convict, and no less certain was the guard of the convict-hulk to which Stuart was consigned that the Old Bailey prisoner was his former charge. Cross-examined on behalf of the prisoner, the guard admitted that the convict Stuart in 1817 possessed a wen on his left hand, and indeed this peculiarity was duly entered in the convict-records as a distinctive mark of the person in question. In answer to the charge preferred

against him, the prisoner stated that he was not the convict Stuart, and that his name was Stippler. Between 1817 and 1834, however, witnesses who might have testified to the truth of his statement had disappeared, and were not forthcoming for the defence. Already the Recorder was prepared to charge the jury, when a singular, and for the prisoner most fortunate, incident occurred. A celebrated surgeon of the day, Mr. Carpue, happened to be seated in court during the trial of the alleged Stuart. Struck with the evidence of the guard of the convict-hulk regarding the presence of a well-marked wen or tumour on the convict's hand, it occurred to Mr. Carpue that this fact could be turned to advantage in the cause of justice. Hurriedly consulting with the counsel for the defence, Mr. Carpue entered the witness-box. He testified, as a surgeon, that the removal of such a wen would entail the presence of an indelible scar as the result of the operation. If the prisoner were Stuart the convict, argued the counsel, either the wen or the scar should be found on his left hand. Both hands of the prisoner were found to be free from wens and from scars alike, whereupon the jury at once acquitted him. In this case a chance accident and the acuteness of the surgeon may be said to have saved an innocent man from a lengthened period of incarceration as a culprit of more than ordinary nature.

The well-known case of Joseph Lesurques, whose misfortune forms the incident on which more than one melodrama and novel has been founded, has recently been brought anew under public notice through Mr. Henry Irving's performance in the *Lyons Mail*, and by his assumption of the dual rôle of Lesurques and his villainous

double. The case actually occurred in France in 1794, and its details are sufficiently well known to obviate the necessity for their repetition here. Charged with robbery and murder, the innocent Lesurques was recognised, identified, and sworn to as the real culprit by various disinterested witnesses. Notwithstanding strong exertions which were made to save his life, and, despite his previous high moral character and probity of conduct, Lesurques was sentenced to death, and executed. Soon afterwards, the real culprit, a man who bore the closest possible likeness to Lesurques, was brought to justice. It was then seen that the similarity in features, stature, build, and manner was so close as to have deceived the witnesses who gave evidence at the trial. On these grounds alone, and as a matter of common recognition and identification, the unfortunate resemblance of Lesurques to the real culprit had unwittingly led them into a 'Comedy of Errors,' which resulted in a legal tragedy as its *dénouement*. But more extraordinary to relate still is the incident, well-nigh unparalleled in the annals of coincidences, that *Lesurques was marked by a scar on the forehead, and by another on the hand, whilst the real criminal likewise possessed similar markings.* Surely 'the grim irony of Fate' could no further go than this, in causing chance likeness to assume a form and to entail consequences so fatal and sad as in the case of Joseph Lesurques.

To the questions involved in the case of persons 'Lost or Missing,' there may be added certain curious considerations respecting the procedure of men and women who voluntarily seek hiding and refuge from fear of the law, or from other circumstances, in which no

fear of legal consequences is apprehended. The story is told of a certain wily cardinal, who, wishing to defeat the emissaries who were sent to discover his secret papers, placed the documents in question in an open envelope on his table, with the result that they were left unheeded and untouched from their mere position, which seemed utterly to disarm suspicion. Whether or not acting intentionally on motives allied to those of the good cardinal, it is perfectly certain that many of the 'lost and missing' members of society have dwelt for months, or even years, close to the very neighbourhood from which they had fled. On this principle, more than one noted criminal has contrived to elude the grasp of the law by remaining quietly beneath the very nose of its officials, whilst the hue and cry sent abroad passed over its actual object dwelling in safety at home. A case was related to the writer of this article in which a person of weak intellect escaped from the house of a medical man, under whose surveillance he had been placed, and caused much trouble and alarm to his friends by his mysterious disappearance. The county police—who are popularly believed to stand in the same relation to the police of cities as do the militia to the regulars—were placed on the alert; rivers and ponds were dragged, hospitals visited, and the disappearance advertised, but all to no purpose. Every trace of him appeared to have been lost; and his relatives had well-nigh given up hope of hearing of him again. Judge of their astonishment when the missing man walked into the house of his medical attendant about a fortnight afterwards, dirty, unkempt, and unshaven, and satisfying their query with the remark,

'O, I've been hiding in the stable-loft,' the said place of temporary residence being a disused loft where he had lain concealed amidst the straw and hay, and from which he had made periodical excursions to confiscate or to purchase provisions with a small store of money with which he had provided himself. Such is the cunning of the insane, which, in its extreme simplicity of ways and means, may often prove more than a match for the dexterity of the astute and the wise.

Beyond the explicable cases of mysterious disappearances, however, there remains, as we have seen, a large proportion of instances in which the fate of numerous individuals remains apparently an impenetrable mystery. Amidst the uncertainties of life, none appear more chilling than those which hedge the present

subject, and which point out the unknown and unknowable elements involved in the disappearance of human units from the sum-total of society, never again to reappear, and whose fate is buried in an obscurity that defies our utmost efforts in the way of penetration. Too frequently, it may be feared, the old apothegm 'Murder will out' is merely a dead letter after all; but the course of events, and especially of criminal life, also teaches us the wholesome truth, that often in ways unlooked for, and through means undreamt of, the Nemesis of crime stalks its victim down. And in such a work, equally with the diffusion of sweetness and light in more æsthetic ways, it may well prove a source of satisfaction that science is able and willing in no small degree to assist and share.

A. W.

PROFESSIONAL BEAUTIES.

In the study of the development of civilisation it is curious to observe the changing fashions of the hour and the vagaries indulged in by human nature. As each century has its special characteristics, so each generation amuses itself by asserting its special fancies. We have had the age of the barons, when doughty deeds and chivalrous feats were the great objects of a mundane ambition and the sole passport to fame. We have had the sacerdotal age, when intellect was cribbed and confined by the restraining influences of superstition, and the lore of the schoolmen was the only study to be pursued. We have had the Augustan age, when poets drew handsome salaries from the Treasury, and satirists were rewarded with high office, and essayists filled the diplomatic service. We have had the military age, when nations were actuated by the greed of aggrandisement and a 'scientific rectification' of their frontiers; the dissipated age, when sensuality was mistaken for love, and revelry for enjoyment; the age of the scheming politician, the age of the effeminate dandy, the age of hard drinking, the age of bribery and corruption; and now it has been reserved for the latter part of this nineteenth century to usher in the aesthetic age. Art, and that burlesque of Nature which some people also call art, have been raised aloft as the tutelary deities of the nation, and their temples are crowded with worshippers. We are nothing unless artistic. A church may be well built, may be sound,

may be well lighted and replete with accommodation; but unless it has been 'restored' according to the approved rules of Gothic teaching, it is useless as a fane for fashionable devotion. Not a tradesman who betakes himself to his suburban villa but must have his furniture planned after what he is pleased to call the 'mid-devil' style. Our modern youth stand aghast at the upholstery abominations which satisfied their inartistic parents, and can alone be appeased by curious wall-papers, blue china, Chippendale chairs, Venetian mirrors, ecclesiastical chandeliers, and all the freaks and whims of decorative industry. Provided anything be 'good art' it is idle to comment upon its inutility, its ugliness, its discomfort, or its inconsistency with its surroundings.

And it must be admitted that 'good art' offers its disciples a wide range of thought, and a sphere of activity which practically has no limits. All is considered fish that falls within the artistic net, if it only have the good fortune to number a few eccentric admirers, to receive the praise of intellect, or to be remarked upon by a distinguished personage. A painting may be blotched and blurred, a figure may be scandalously out of drawing, a poem may be incomprehensible, or a building may be all gables and corners; but if it meet with the approval of one of the endless coteries into which art and the caricature of art have divided themselves, it is certain to be admired, and the artist, author, or architect to be looked upon as

'a new teacher.' Variety is charming, and in the multitude of counsellors we are told there is wisdom. On one side we are taught to admire the fleshly school, on the other all that is diaphanous and spiritual. Here we are surrounded by the disciples of pre-Raphaelitism, and there we have to listen to the sneers against a servile admiration of Nature. Men whom we have regarded as geniuses are run down to the lowest depth of disparagement and branded as being utterly 'deficient in true art.' The great painters of the past, the great poets of the past, the great sculptors of the past, are bidden to hide their diminished heads and to make room for the new lights of our generation, who alone are worthy to illumine the temples of art and of culture. In former days the most faithful interpretation of Nature was considered art; we now are wiser, and any eccentricity, if only approved of by fashion, need not despair of being classed as 'art.'

From the inanimate in art to the animate is but in the natural order of progression. When the canvas and the marble have their admirers, it is only to be expected that the noblest as well as the most graceful work in creation should be treated with supreme homage. The female figure divine has no reason at the present day to consider herself among the neglected. In art she is, as she has always been, the favourite model; and in society she is now the great centre of attraction. We have suddenly arrived at the strange conclusion that the original is of more value than the copy. Instead of gazing at the Old Masters, and wandering about galleries to pick up works of art, we go to the fountain-head at once, and seek in boudoir and *salon* for beauty. A lovely woman, or a

woman who enjoys the reputation for loveliness—for the two things are not synonymous—has developed from the toy of the hour or from a passing distraction into a great social force. The professional beauty need not be rich, she need not be highly born, she need not even be well educated, provided she have sense enough to escape from committing any glaring solecisms. All that is required of her is, that her face should be stamped by society with the trade-mark as a great beauty, and her future is assured. Women her superiors in social station will inundate her with cards for dinners and receptions. Rank and fashion will hang about the staircase, to greet her on her entrance and petition for a dance. The favoured seat on the coach will be reserved for her at the meeting of the drags. Artists will vie with each other in inviting her into their studios, in the hope that they will be permitted to transfer the likeness of her beautiful head to their canvases. Milliners will lend the weight of her name to articles of the toilette that they have just brought out. She will be the idol of the hour, and no great social gathering will be considered complete without her presence. What birth was in the old days, what money is in these, so beauty now is to woman. The professional belle takes the *pas* of all her sisters, and is in the possession of advantages from which many of her betters are excluded. It is not therefore surprising that ambitious mothers, conscious that repartee is at a discount and modesty a thing of the imagination, should indulge in every effort to transform their daughters into beauties. Yet the process is both a difficult one and uncertain in its results. In this aesthetic age he would be a bold man who

would foretell the damsel who is to blossom forth into a notorious belle. Are there not numbers of girls to be met with at any ball or garden-party who are in the possession of perfect features, magnificent eyes, golden tresses, winning manners, and splendid figures, yet they are not admitted within the rank of the professional beauty? Why? Compare them with the belle whose name is as a household word in society, and whose photograph is a valuable copyright, and to the mind untutored in the eccentricities of aestheticism it would appear as if the professional beauty were in the comparison at a disadvantage. Yet the beauty of society, though we may think her haggard in face, wanting in refinement, or irregular in feature, passes on her way enveloped in an atmosphere of praise and homage to new triumphs, whilst the lovely outsider is ignored and neglected. To have a face and head that Greuze would worship are not therefore in themselves sufficient to entitle their possessor to enter the circle of the professional beauty. Other gifts must be discovered and other influences brought to bear before success be attained.

We are in this country so the slaves of public opinion, we are so dependent on the judgment of others, we so love to follow and hate to lead, that unless our minds are made up for us either by our social or intellectual superiors we hesitate before expressing our own views upon any subject. The woman, be she girl or matron, who aspires to the position of a professional beauty must thus be launched forth into the world under powerful auspices. If she rely upon the force of her own unaided charms she may as well relinquish the struggle altogether; she will be spared much

jealousy, bitterness, and disappointment. But under the aegis of valuable protection she has various courses open to her. A fashionable artist has it in his power to create any pretty woman in whom he takes an interest into a beauty. He has but to paint her portrait, to speak about his model in society, and to express admiration for the artistic beauties to be found in her face, and the thing is done. She will be sought out, and, unless her position be too humble or her character be tarnished, she will be warmly welcomed and received, and only dropped when she ceases to be the rage. It is in the power of a great dame of fashion to raise any fascinating *protégée* of her own to the position of a beauty. Wherever she goes she talks about her, she states the numbers of offers she has refused, she romances as to the admiration of the artists for her; and thus gradually the beauty is advertised, brought forward, and her claims end by being finally accepted. Again, the dancing division, should it be unanimous in its admiration of a certain face or figure, can by its support and expression of opinion force the fair recipient of Nature's favours into the privileged enclosure of the professional beauty. But the simplest and easiest course of all these to adopt is to be borne along the royal road to the goal of success. To be openly admired by a Prince of the Blood, to be seen on his arm at receptions, to accept his escort in the Row, to make one in an exclusive quadrille or cotillon, to have one's witty remarks and rejoinders passed from lip to lip in the boudoir and the club, to be the courted guest at country houses where Royalty attends,—and the professional beauty is not only created, but she occupies the uppermost seats

in the assembly of her sisters. We are living under a plutocracy, and ostentation and exhibition have a market value to which hitherto they have been strangers. It may strike the minds of some that to be constantly the subject of comment, to be the incessant object of attraction, and to hand over the expression of one's face and the poses of one's figure to the photographer, are scarcely consistent with that modesty and sensitiveness which poets and the inexperienced have generally associated with the fair sex. Still, if the husbands do not object, why should society? Beauty has forced bullion to beat a retreat. He who is rich need not go friendless, says the Latin grammar; but he whose wife is a beauty, says the breviary of Belgravia, is sure of troops of friends.

The name by which society designates these, its latest *protégées*, aptly hits off their duties and position. We have had political beauties, women who in the fierce days of bribery and corruption gave a kiss for a vote, and used the power they possessed to further the ends of the parliamentary candidate they affected. We have had intellectual beauties, women whose aim it was to fill their *salons* with all the talents, and to stimulate the efforts of genius by their patronage and encouragement. There has been a time in our history when even venal beauties were not unknown; but it has been reserved for the latter part of this nineteenth century to make us acquainted with the *professional* beauty. And she is professional. What his tongue and knowledge of the law are to the barrister, what anatomy is to the surgeon and medicine to the physician, what art is to the painter and the sculptor, what mechanics are to the engineer, her beauty is

to the professional belle. It is her stock-in-trade, and often her sole credentials for social support. There is nothing of the shyness, the indecision or lack of confidence of the amateur about her. It is the object of the professional belle always to be *en évidence*. The art of the photographer must be enlisted in her favour; the 'society journals' must chat about her dress and movements; she must furnish talk for club smoking-rooms, and be a fruitful source of gossip for fashionable boudoirs; malice, bitter misconstructions, feuds, jealousies, to these she does not object, for they keep her name before the public, and act only as so many advertisements of the new calling she has taken up. There are women who might object to have their portraits suspended in the shop-windows between photographs of a nude Zulu and a half-nude actress, for every passer-by to criticise and examine. Not so the professional belle. 'My face is my fortune, sir, she says; and so when one pose or one dress or one expression has been sufficiently circulated throughout the land, thanks to the medium of the photographer, we are treated to another pose or another dress or another expression, and so on *ad infinitum*. There are some ladies who would regard it as the gravest insult to be the constant theme of men's conversation and women's comments, and to have their sayings and doings discussed as if they were so much public property. Not so the professional belle. She knows how to dress, she is a great social power, she enjoys the homage of the sterner sex. What does she care for the spite and the strictures of women, of women, too, upon whom she has only to smile to turn them into her most abject of slaves? She is the idol of the hour, and

the more exposed her shrine and the more discussed her charms, the greater will be the throngs of those who come to worship her or to stare at her. Her vanity is unbounded, and because she is Fashion's pet everything is to be permitted her. She is often very rude to those of her own sex who are infinitely her superiors, and she loves to snub a man, not because she dislikes him, but because she loves to exhibit her power with all the caprice and want of consideration of the petty tyrant. She surrounds herself with a little court of admirers, who generally accompany her to the dances and garden-parties she honours with her presence. It is well she should have some one, for the professional beauty, though always a married woman, is a jewel of such magnificence as to dispense almost entirely with the setting of a husband. We are given to understand that the husband is somewhere about, but where he is or what he does or what he has is a matter of such indifference to society that it is really beneath inquiry. On the very few occasions when allusion is made to him he loses his own individuality, and is addressed as the husband of Mrs. A. or of Lady B. But we cannot have everything in this world, and when men draw such a prize as a professional beauty out of the matrimonial lottery they must not grumble. Still there are, perhaps, a few ignoble souls who are grateful that their wives, if beauties, are not professional beauties, and who have the bad taste to prefer the privacy of domesticity to the notoriety of heroine-worship.

Yet beauty-bitten as we are, is it aught else than a fashion? and like all fashions—like skating on wheels or last year's bonnets—to-day the rage, and to-morrow for-

saken for a newer and more amusing toy! Those who hold their empire through the caprice of Fashion possess a tenure of power which is seldom of long duration; we have seen 'lions' of the most leonine character one season, who, the next, have been regarded but as the most ordinary of the domestic animals. The professional beauty is, therefore, not altogether one of the foolish virgins in acting upon the principle of making hay whilst the sun shines. And it must be admitted that that fiery orb does shine upon her at the present moment with a force and lurid glow which is dazzling in the extrema. In London the professional beauty queens it wherever she goes. Not a ball is a success without her presence, or that of her sisters. At dinner she eclipses rank, wealth, and fame, and is the object of attentions which would be flattering were they less curious and obtrusive. Whenever she takes her walks abroad, she becomes almost mobbed by her admirers, and has had more than once to take refuge in a friendly passing carriage. Should she ride in the Row, a little cavalcade accompanies her, which only quits her presence when some very distinguished personage comes up and canters by her side. Her passage through the realms of society is like a royal progress, so marked are the homage and adulations she receives. Yet if in London her position is so prominent, it is an obscurity compared to the sway she exercises in the country. At castle, court, and hall, she is, no matter who may be the visitors, always the most favoured of guests. Her word is law, and her wishes command the amusement of the hour. If she votes guessing acrostics dull, acrostics are abandoned. If she wishes burlesque instead of

comedy to be acted, the little theatre is made busy with rehearsals for burlesque. Does she suggest joining the gentlemen who are out covert-shooting at the witching hour of luncheon, the afternoon calls or the drive to the neighbouring ruins are put off. Does she express a desire to meet certain people, those certain people are at once asked. Is she fond of hunting, the best and safest of mounts that the stables possess are placed at her disposal, whilst the most sober and careful of grooms is specially told off to attend upon her, and to see that her exquisite beauty should not for a moment be in danger. Balls, dinners, lawn-meets, and all the rest of social hospitalities and distractions, are given in her honour ; and all her tastes and inclinations are so carefully studied by her

host and hostess, that when she takes her departure it is difficult to decide which feeling is uppermost in the breast of her entertainers—the sense of pride at having obtained a visit from the great beauty, or a sense of relief at having got rid of her. Still, crowned and enthroned as the professional beauty now is, it would not surprise me if soon a social revolution were to take place, and she be deposed and exiled to the obscurity from which she sprang. Beauty will always receive its due meed of homage and admiration ; but there is no reason why we should go out of our senses about it, and exalt it to a position which tends to destroy all that is charming and attractive in woman. Honest respect is one thing, a silly idolatry is quite another.

TOM TURNER'S DUEL.

A Story of College Life.

CHAPTER I.

ST. BOODLE'S.

It's an old story now, for this shocking affair took place in the year 1840, when Tom Turner and I were freshmen together at St. Boodle's College, in the University of Oxbridge.

St. Boodle's is one of the small colleges in Oxbridge, but it had in our day, and has still, I believe, the reputation of being about the pleasantest and most comfortable place in which an undergraduate's lines could fall.

The 'men' in the college were a very nice set, but it must be confessed not 'a reading lot,' nor much addicted to having their names appear in conspicuous places in the class-lists, but taking their degrees, when they did take them, in a quiet, sometimes in an extremely deliberate, way. Once, indeed, I remember that a St. Boodle's man came out a double first; we were all as much delighted as amazed. This shows, we said, what St. Boodle's men can do when they like. But the strange thing was that none of us knew the man; we had never met him at a supper-party or a wine. It was said, and no doubt truly, that he lived in college, for all St. Boodle's men did, and certainly his name was in the calendar. And when he took his place at the high table we all admitted that his features were somehow familiar to us, and that we must have seen him in chapel or in hall. No question but that he really was a St. Boodle's man.

And when Dick Slasher offered a hundred to one on it, he could find no one to take even such long odds.

But if, as a rule, we did not distinguish ourselves in the examination halls, we did pretty well elsewhere; we had five 'Varsity blues' amongst us, three in the eleven and two in the eight. Our boat was high on the river, and in the hunting-field we flattered ourselves that we were unrivalled. And was not this something? As we won a steeplechase or bumped the stern out of the boat before us on the river, or bowled down one after another of our opponents' wickets, we used to hear on all sides, 'Well done, St. Boodle's! that's their style! St. Boodle's for ever! Hurrah!' And we felt and knew that this was glory.

We used often to discuss the relative merits of the two theories of education,—the general, and the St. Boodle's theories, as I may call them. 'Well,' Dick Slasher used to say, 'it seems to me an absurd thing to measure a man's usefulness in the world by his skill in dealing with your Greek or your cube roots, whatever they are; that's not what has made England what she is. If the Duke had looked into the Senate House when the little go was going on, he'd never have said, "That's where the Battle of Waterloo was won." Come, I'll lay ten to one it would have been "Go it, St. Boodle's" with him. Will any one take me?' Of course no one took him. Even had there been any means of deciding the bet, we were all

quite of his opinion, and ready to give the odds, every one of us.

As for our 'dons,' they were a first-rate set, we all agreed, with no nonsense about them. So long as a St. Boodle's man did not do anything sufficiently singular to bring his college into undue notice, he was not interfered with, and any success in the orthodox St. Boodle's line was always heartily welcomed and applauded by the authorities. It was whispered, indeed, that our tutor, Dr. Turtle, was anxious to change the character of St. Boodle's, and make it more of a reading college; but this, I think, was a slander. He certainly took no definite step in such a direction; and the rumour took its rise, I imagine, from a certain gruff and severe air which the doctor put on to awe freshmen and keep them down, as it were, a little at first, so that they might not be quite unmanageable by their third year.

From what has been said it may easily be supposed that college life at St. Boodle's was about as easy-going and pleasant a sort of thing as can be imagined.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUELLING PISTOLS.

It was towards the end of the October — the freshman's — term that I went up one evening afterhall to wine with Duke. Duke, let me say, was what may be called a model St. Boodle's man. He was reckoned the best horseman in the college, and therefore, as we believed, the best in the University. He was in the University Eleven moreover, was a capital bat, and acknowledged to be the best wicket-keeper in the team. He was, besides all this, as pleasant and jovial a fellow as you would find; full of fun, and in a word quite an

ornament, as we said, to his college. When I add that Duke was 'a third-year man,' it will be understood that he was held in much veneration by us freshmen.

Tom Turner and I went up together to Duke's rooms on the occasion I refer to. Capital rooms they were too, and so comfortably furnished. Quite a crowd of easy chairs, and the walls were decorated with, in addition to some good engravings, fencing-foils, rackets, boxing-gloves, whip-racks, pipe-racks, and other concomitants of a thorough college (St. Boodle's) training. When Turner and I entered, there were several men already seated round the fire cracking walnuts and sipping their port — Fairchild and Tredennick of St. Audit's, who had been dining in hall with Duke; the former of these being remarkably handsome, but very slight and delicate-looking, and, as I afterwards learned, a capital actor, always taking ladies' parts in the University theatrical society. There were, besides, Dick Slasher, and Jack Bulfinch, of our college.

As we joined the circle, they were examining a handsome pair of duelling pistols which were being handed round for inspection. Where did you get them? and why did you get them, and what are you going to do with them? were the questions being asked. 'Well, I got them at some old fellow's auction,' said Duke; 'there was a crowd about the door of the house; I went in to see what was up. The pistols were going for a song as I entered; I made a bid, and they were knocked down to me, and as to what I shall do with them I am sure I don't know. One thing you may take your oath I sha'n't do. If I am fool enough to buy what I don't want, I'm not quite such a fool as to go in for duelling.'

Upon this a discussion on the merits of duelling arose, in which, rather to our surprise, Turner stoutly advocated the practice. It was, he asserted, beneficial to society; it promoted a fine and courageous spirit; there were evils which the law could not reach, and cases in which a duel was the gentleman's only resource, and so on. Not that Tom Turner was really convinced of all this, but he thought it the right sort of thing to say.

Tom, you see, had the misfortune to be an only son; and his adoring parents had, up to this, kept him at home, where they made rather too much of him; and he was, in consequence, just the sort of fellow for whom a little 'taking down' would be wholesome. He appeared his first day at lecture, I remember, in such a dilapidated condition—his gown torn, and the board of his cap broken into little pieces, that he might not look like a freshman—that Dr. Turtle insisted on his getting a new cap and gown at once.

Now this sort of thing was not liked at St. Boodle's; it was pronounced 'bad form.'

'A man may do what he likes here, of course,' said Dick Slasher, 'but affection be hanged.'

Still Turner was not a bad fellow. And had his education been perfect, why, there would have been nothing left for the University to do. And it is true, even at St. Boodle's, that one lives and learns.

'Come now, Turner,' said Jack Bulfinch, 'it's easy to talk in that sort of way, but a state of things in which you were not able to have a dinner-party without the chance of a duel after the dessert was, in my mind, about as bad as could be; wire fences are a trifle to it.'

'And all the good it did,' remarked Slasher, 'was to give your

professional scoundrel the power of bullying his betters.'

Turner could not see this. No one, he asserted, need fight unless there was a good cause; and he took leave, he said, to hold his own opinion on the subject.

'Well, old boy,' said Duke, 'with your way of thinking, it's more than likely that you will have an affair of honour before you pass the little go; and if you do, I'll lend you these tools, and be your second to boot.'

'All right! So you shall,' replied Turner; and the subject dropped. —

CHAPTER III.

MISS TREDENNICK.

ABOUT a week after this Duke and Tredennick came to my rooms one morning.

'Come, like a good fellow,' said the latter, 'and dine with me this evening. Excuse a short invitation. I want to show my sister a little college life; how we unfortunate fellows do when we are torn from the bosom of our families; and I have asked a few fellows to dinner.'

'Have you seen his sister?' Duke whispered to me as he was leaving. 'Splendid creature! Turner's asked too; be sure you bring him with you.'

Accordingly, at six o'clock I found myself in Tredennick's rooms in St. Audit's. Turner was already there. Duke and Bulfinch entered almost with me.

'Well, we are all here now; dinner may come up,' said Tredennick. 'Let me introduce you to my sister.'

Then a young lady left the window, where she had been sitting, and came towards us.

'My sister—Mr. Bulfinch, Mr. Duke, Mr. Turner, Mr. Standish—all of St. Boodle's,' said Tredennick, as we made our bows.

I have a particularly good memory for faces, and the moment Miss Tredennick turned towards me hers struck me as familiar; but I could not think where I had seen her. She was a very handsome girl; a dark style of beauty, and not a bit like her brother. She was very tall and fine-looking, with dark hair and pale complexion and well-cut features. The mouth, indeed, was a little too large, but it gave the face a pleasant expression. She had slightly arched eyebrows, long dark eyelashes, and, to crown all, a pair of splendid dark eyes. She wore a black-velvet gown with long sleeves, and with a lace frill about the neck and wrists. The dress was most becoming, and Miss Tredennick looked in it, I don't say pretty, but stately, magnificent. She was not a person to forget. 'Where can I have seen her?' I asked myself.

'I wonder who will have the luck to take her in to dinner,' whispered Duke. 'Isn't she a stunner, Turner?'

Turner evidently thought so. He clearly was falling in love with her as fast as possible; he could not take his eyes off her or listen to what any one else was saying.

It fell to no one's lot to take Miss Tredennick in to dinner.

Tredennick had been fortunate enough to get rooms which had been intended for a don, and so had two sitting-rooms; in the inner of these—his study—dinner was laid. When it was announced, Tredennick said to his sister,

'Well, Lucy, as we cannot all take you in, and as it would be invidious to make any distinction, pray go first, and we shall follow.'

And so we went in to dinner and seated ourselves at the table, Turner contriving to secure for himself the seat beside the lady.

The dinner passed off most plea-

santly. Duke and Tredennick were both in great spirits, telling capital stories and making no end of jokes. Turner was also enjoying himself, and no wonder, for Miss Tredennick was evidently making herself very agreeable. They never ceased talking to one another all the time.

Dinner over, Miss Tredennick withdrew, and when the decanters had gone round a couple of times, our host proposed that we should follow her and have some music.

'My sister,' he said, 'is supposed to play and sing pretty fairly.'

There was a piano in the next room, and Miss Tredennick was easily persuaded to gratify us; and certainly her brother had not spoken too highly of her powers. She had a quite unusual contralto voice, which, for a lady, was singularly strong and full in the lower notes, and she sang with much spirit and feeling. She played well, too, her touch being both firm and full of expression. For appearance, though, I should have preferred a smaller and less muscular hand. After a little while, Tredennick, rather to my disappointment, proposed that we should have a rubber of whist, to which Bulfinch and Duke at once agreed.

'Who will take the fourth hand? My sister does not play. Will you, Standish?' our host asked.

'Well,' I said, 'I have no objection; but there's Turner, perhaps he would—'

'O, not at all!' exclaimed Tom eagerly. 'I had much rather look on, indeed I would. I am a wretched hand at whist.'

'O, don't let us have him,' whispered Duke to me, 'he'd be certain to revoke. Don't you see there's only one suit he's capable of thinking of now?'

'Perhaps Mr. Turner would like a little more music,' said Miss

Tredennick, with the sweetest smile.

'Of course he would,' said her brother; 'and as you are going to play, we shall go into the next room, so as not to be distracted by the ravishing sounds. Come along, Standish. Fill your glasses and make yourselves as comfortable as the circumstances will admit,' said our host, as we sat down at the whist table. 'My sister and Turner will amuse one another very well for a bit, and when he likes he can cut in.'

So we began our rubber.

The door between the rooms was left open, and we could hear the singing very well. Miss Tredennick was most obliging, and sang quite a number of songs, to which I confess I attended more than to our game, and so played very badly. I remember one song in particular; it was of a plaintive character, and the low notes of Miss Tredennick's voice sounded most touching and full of feeling. I just caught these words, almost whispered as they were:

'For me the summer's waning,
 Kayless the depths above;
Dark all the days remaining:
 He knows not that I love.'

Come, now, I thought to myself, you are not so old and the prospect is not quite so gloomy as all that; and if he does not know, it's not your fault. You see, I was feeling a little annoyed with Turner—too bad of him to have all the fun.

Then the singing ceased, and I was able to attend better to the game.

CHAPTER IV.

AN AWKWARD DILEMMA.

ALL this time I had been wondering if it was possible that I had seen Miss Tredennick before. I must have seen some one like her,

I thought, but who? and it had just struck me that if Fairchild, whom I met a few evenings before, had been six feet high, Miss Tredennick was the kind of girl one might have expected his sister to be, when suddenly our game was brought to a close.

A piercing shriek came from the next room. We started to our feet and looked at one another. Then there came another and another.

'Good heavens, what has happened?' exclaimed Tredennick.

Then we all rushed into the next room. There we saw Miss Tredennick fallen on the sofa with her face buried in her hands, and evidently in a hysterical condition. Turner was standing beside her trying to raise her up.

'What in heaven's name is this?' cried Tredennick. 'What has happened? What is the matter, Lucy? tell me!'

There was no answer.

'Lucy darling,' he asked again, 'can't you speak? What is wrong? O, tell me!'

Then, in a voice choked with sobs, we heard her say:

'Ask Mr. Turner; he can tell you.'

'What is it, sir?' said Tredennick, addressing our unfortunate friend. 'What is the meaning of this? What have you done? Tell me at once.'

'In a moment,' answered Turner. 'Just allow me to explain.'

'Let me at any rate be spared your explanation, sir,' said Miss Tredennick, rising from the sofa. 'Take me away, Fred,' and Tredennick led his sister into the room we had left, saying to Turner as he passed: 'You shall hear from me, sir, about this.' And the door was closed.

'Awkward business this,' said Bulfinch. 'What in the world, Turner, have you been doing?'

'I am sure I don't know,' he answered.

'Awkward indeed!' said Duke. 'You have evidently grossly insulted Miss Tredennick, however you did it. I would not have believed it of you, Turner, indeed I would not; it's too bad. Of course there must be no duelling or any nonsense of that kind. You will make an ample apology, Turner. You must say that you deeply regret what in a moment of infatuation you have done, and all that sort of thing. Tredennick is a first-rate fellow; and if the apology is such as a gentleman ought to offer in a case of the sort, I'll answer for it he will accept it.'

'Well, but just hear me,' said Turner. 'I did nothing, positively nothing. I'd be the last person in the world to insult Miss Tredennick. There has been some mistake.'

'What, did you not attempt to—ah, ahem—to kiss her?' said Duke.

'Most certainly not,' cried Turner. 'Nothing of the kind. I give you my honour as a gentleman.'

'O, then it's all right,' said Duke. 'I shall go and speak to Tredennick, as you say there has been some mistake, and a few words will explain all.'

Saying this he knocked at the door and went in. As we stood silent by the fireplace, some very strange but indistinct sounds came from the next room.

'What's that?' said Turner.

'O, that's the noise,' said Bulfinch, 'that Tredennick makes when he has lost control over himself. He must be in a frightful rage.'

In about five minutes Duke returned.

'I can't understand it at all,' he said. 'Miss Tredennick is deeply offended, and evidently thinks you have given her good cause to com-

plain of your behaviour, and her brother is furious, simply furious! Well, now, it's rather an awkward question to put to you, Turner, and you must quite understand that I don't wish to interfere in the matter; but the fact is that the lady says, or imagines, or—ah, well—that in fact you pressed her hand, or wrist, or something of the kind. Well, now, may I ask, is that the case?'

'Yes, it is,' said Turner. 'You see she asked me to feel her pulse.'

'Whew!' exclaimed Bulfinch, his eyebrows going up. 'That's odd, anyhow.'

'Well, but,' continued Duke, speaking with some hesitation, 'that's not all, you see. You really must excuse me, Turner; I'd like to have this matter settled satisfactorily, if possible. Might I venture to ask if—if, ah—pray pardon me, it's not curiosity on my part, I assure you—if, ah—in fact Miss Tredennick is right in supposing that you went so very far as to put your arm round her waist?'

'Well,' said Turner, rather confused, 'not exactly; that is to say—well, yes, in a kind of a way I did. Allow me to explain.'

'O, certainly,' said Duke.

'What I mean is,' he continued—'well, in fact she asked me to feel how her heart was beating.'

'By George!' said Bulfinch, and he thrust his hands into his pockets, and began to whistle softly.

Duke remained silent.

'I am afraid this is worse than I thought it,' he said, after a few minutes' consideration. 'I really never knew anything so awkward.'

Then he took a few turns up and down the room.

'One must do something,' he said at last, 'and I'll just go and try to explain the matter to Tredennick.'

He walked quickly towards the door, but then hesitated, advancing more slowly, and evidently in doubt. Before he reached it, however, he turned and came back to the fireplace, where we were standing.

'I say, Bulfinch,' he asked, 'could you go in and explain it, do you think?'

'Faith, I could not,' Jack replied. 'I don't understand it a bit.'

'O, come, like a good fellow, you might try,' he urged; but Bulfinch remained obstinate.

'Well, I'll make the attempt,' said Duke, 'as I suppose I must'; and he went again towards the door. This time his hand was on the handle; but he paused and again turned back, exclaiming, 'It's no go; upon my life, Turner, I can't do it. It's just the most awkward business I was ever in. You, see,' he explained, 'I could of course say to Tredennick, Turner acknowledges that he did squeeze your sister's hand and put his arm round her waist; but he asserts that it was at her request he did it, to find how her heart was beating. That would sound rather odd, now, would it not? And Tredennick would be certain to ask, "Why, then, did my sister shriek and go into hysterics?" In fact he would not believe it. And between ourselves, old fellow, very few would.'

'Precious few, by Jove!' remarked Bulfinch emphatically.

'I hope you don't mean to doubt my word, Bulfinch!' exclaimed Turner, reddening.

'Come now, old man,' said Duke, 'don't lose your temper. One affair of this kind is enough at a time, in all conscience; but just let me finish what I was saying. Even if your account is true, as of course it is, and that Miss Tredennick asked you to squeeze her wrist and all the rest of it, you

see you can't well allege this by way of explanation. It would not be honourable, you know, or fair by the lady. It would never do to betray the—what shall I call it?—well, the very unusual—ahem!—I may say, extraordinary confidence she has reposed in you, and exculpate yourself at her expense. As it is, of course, what you have said will not go beyond ourselves; but you must quite see that her brother would be—and justly too—even more indignant at the explanation than at the original offence.'

At this moment Tredennick came to the door and called Bulfinch into the room. After a few moments the latter returned, and said,

'Tredennick is of opinion that if Mr. Turner has not some explanation to give, there is but one course open to him; and he has asked me to act as his second, which I have consented to do. He thinks, moreover—and I quite agree with him—that this affair should be kept strictly secret, as there is a lady in the case; and trusts, therefore, that Mr. Turner will choose one of the gentlemen present to act on his behalf.'

'This is most unfortunate,' said Turner. 'I can't apologise, for that would be in effect to say that I acted improperly, which would be untrue; and my explanation, as you have pointed out, would only make the matter worse.'

'Why, yes, you see,' said Duke, 'there are cases when a duel is a gentleman's only resource.'

'Yes, by George!' added Bulfinch, 'that's exactly what Tredennick is saying, that this is a wrong for which the law of the country provides no remedy, or only one, which consideration for his sister makes it impossible for him to obtain.'

'It's well, old fellow,' said Duke, 'that duelling is so much in your

line; for there is nothing else for it, I fear. I am to be your second, of course, I suppose! By Jove, when I bought the tools the other day I had no idea we should want them so soon!

CHAPTER V.

THE MEETING.

WE now left Tredennick's rooms and returned to St. Boodle's; it being deputed, of course, to Duke and Bulfinch to make arrangements for the meeting.

'If you and Standish will go up to my rooms, Turner,' Duke said, as we entered college, 'I will be with you in a few minutes, and tell you what we have decided on.'

We did so, and in about a quarter of an hour Duke came in rubbing his hands.

'Well, Turner, old fellow,' he said, 'it's all right; everything is settled most satisfactorily. Bulfinch thinks that the affair admits of no delay, if we are to keep it quiet. These things, you see, are certain to get abroad if you give them time; and then you would be subjected to a good deal of annoyance, and the meeting might even be prevented altogether. It's to be to-morrow, therefore. We three will have a quiet breakfast in my rooms at ten o'clock; for Standish, of course, comes with us, to act as umpire should any little difference arise. And afterwards we will walk out and meet Bulfinch and his man at the Willows at twelve. It's a quiet spot, about a mile out of town, where there will be no fear of interruption. The arrangements are capital, are they not, old man?' Duke added cheerfully.

'O yes, I suppose so,' said Turner, speaking with some hesitation.

'Do you know,' said Duke, 'I

disagreed with you the other evening about duelling; but this affair has quite changed my views, and I am glad the credit of St. Boodle's is in such safe hands. You will be quite a hero, Turner; and in your freshman's term, too; for of course this affair will leak out, do what we may to keep it quiet.'

The next day, about eleven o'clock, Turner, Duke, and I sauntered out of St. Boodle's gate, and took the way to the Willows. On reaching the ground we found that the other party had not yet arrived.

'Strange they are not here,' said Turner, with a short laugh. 'I hope they won't keep us long waiting.' And he took a cigar out of his case and lit it.

'He's as cool as a cucumber,' remarked Duke. 'Are you not, Turner?'

Turner did not reply, for just at that moment the sound of wheels was heard. The vehicle stopped in the lane adjoining, and Tredennick and his second appeared.

'O, they have come in the cab,' said Duke. 'It's all right; we arranged that a vehicle should be in attendance, and should bring a disguise for the survivor. It's well to be prepared for all contingencies.'

The pistols were now loaded, fourteen paces measured out, and the men placed. I was to give the signal.

'Now,' said Duke to Turner, placing him sideways, 'keep your head over your right shoulder, so; and your eye fixed on Tredennick.' Then, placing the pistol in his hand, 'Remember the hair-trigger. All you have to do is to raise your hand to the right height, and you are certain to hit.'

'O, no,' said Turner, 'I sha'n't. I mean to fire in the air. You see I have no quarrel with Tredennick; if he chooses to shoot

me, I can't help it. But I wish you, in case I fall, to remember that I fire in the air; and you will tell my friends so.'

'O, no, old fellow, you must not think of such a thing,' rejoined Duke. 'He calls you out, you see; it's the other side's doing, you know, not ours. And I'd wing him at any rate.'

There was no time for a reply. The signal was about to be given. A moment after both pistols went off together. When the smoke cleared off Turner was standing at his post, but Tredennick had fallen. A moment later Bulfinch was supporting him in his arms; but plainly it was all over with him. His hat, which he had worn low down over his brows, had fallen off; and even at some distance we could see the fatal mark in the very centre of his forehead.

As Turner walked slowly towards his opponent, Duke and Bulfinch ran to meet him.

'Come,' they said, 'this is a serious business, and there is not a moment to be lost. We must, at any rate, secure your escape.'

'I can't understand how it happened,' said Turner. 'You will bear me witness, Duke, that I fired in the air.'

'Faith, not I,' said Duke. 'Standish and I both saw it. And a cooler aim, or a prettier shot, was never seen.'

By this time we had reached the cab.

'Get in,' said Bulfinch. 'We brought a disguise; you must change as quickly as possible.'

A few moments after, Turner was arrayed in a complete suit of corduroy, with a carter's smock and hat, and a red shaggy wig. Then we all got in and drove towards town; but, strangely enough, I fancied as I stepped into the cab that sounds like those Bulfinch said Tredennick made when he

lost control of himself were coming from the field we had left.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DISCOVERY.

On our way to St. Boodle's we learned that Duke and Bulfinch had foreseen and provided for every contingency.

'Our best course now,' said the latter, 'is this. We will get you into college. My uncle, old Turtle, has gone off on business for a week, and I have the run of his rooms. There is a kind of loft above his bedroom, that no one ever goes up to; you shall hide there while the search for you is going on. They will never think of looking in the tutor's rooms; and I, being on the staircase, can easily get you supplied with food. As to the rest, we must be guided by circumstances.'

At some distance from the college we got out. Duke and I walked first, and Bulfinch with Turner following a little after.

'Come, and I will just show you that hamper, carrier,' Bulfinch said to the latter, as they passed the porter.

And so we got Turner safely into Dr. Turtle's rooms, and showed him the lumber-room where he was to be hidden.

'You had better stay up there,' Bulfinch remarked, 'till the servants leave college at ten. I will bring you in some provisions to-night.' And we left him.

'Have some supper for two laid in my uncle's rooms the last thing before you leave college,' Bulfinch said to his 'scout,' whom we passed on the stairs.

'Or shall I say for three, Duke?' he asked as we reached the court. 'He will be as hungry as a horse by that, you know; and he will

want the remains for breakfast and lunch to-morrow.'

'Must not feed him too high, Jack,' Duke replied. 'He can't take much exercise up there, you see. Supper for two will do.'

That night after ten o'clock, when the college gates were closed and all was quiet, we went to see Turner. Supper was ready on the table, so we called him down from his hiding-place. And certainly he did justice to it.

'Have you heard anything? Has it been discovered yet?' he asked.

'Well, I believe the—ah—corpse has come into the college,' Duke replied.

'And am I suspected?' Turner asked. 'Are they looking for me?'

'O, they have not missed you yet,' said Bulfinch; 'but there will be the deuce of a search when they do, and we must just keep you quiet till it is over.'

'And what then?' asked Turner.

'Well, you see,' Duke replied, 'this is a very serious matter indeed, and we consider that the only safe course will be to get you out of the country. We think of having you conveyed by barge down the river—say packed in a chest or hamper, or something of that kind—and we shall arrange with some small coasting vessel to take you across to France until this unfortunate business is forgotten. But bye-bye, old fellow. It's not safe for us to stay too long here, it might attract notice. And be careful, should you hear any one moving about through the day, not to be discovered; indeed it would be as well for you not to come down at all till after ten at night, unless you hear the signal from us. What do you think, Bulfinch?'

'O, I quite agree with you,' he replied.

And so, after seeing Turner

safely into his retreat, and making him take the remainder of the provisions with him, we said good-night, and left him.

The next day an unexpected event upset all Duke's and Bulfinch's carefully-arranged plans. It was late—about nine o'clock. There were several of us standing about the foot of Duke's staircase, to whose rooms we and some men from other colleges were going, as the Mutton-Chop Club was to meet there that night. Bulfinch had just left us for the purpose of ordering supper for two to be laid in Turtle's rooms, when, to my consternation, I saw a cab draw up at the college gate and the Doctor himself step out of it. He had returned several days sooner than was expected. I rushed after Bulfinch, and was just in time to prevent the supper being ordered.

'Well, here is a precious fix!' he said when he heard my news. 'Let us go and consult Duke at once.'

We did so, but could see no way out of our difficulty.

'It just comes to this,' said Duke, 'that Turner will either be starved or discovered—the former will perhaps be the most unpleasant for him, the latter for us. You don't think now that he could last to the end of term without food, do you?'

'I don't know whether he could or not, but I am very sure he won't,' said Bulfinch. 'To judge from the way he ate last night, I should say he was finding it rather hard to keep quiet this moment.'

'No chance of getting him any food to-night, I suppose?' said Duke.

'Don't see how it's possible,' said Bulfinch.

'H'm. What about the window?' said Duke, reflecting. 'Might not something be done with a basket and string?'

'Could not possibly till the Doc-

tor is asleep, and risky business then,' said Bulfinch.

'Well, we must try it,' answered Duke. 'And to-morrow we will watch old Turtle out of his rooms to lecture or chapel or somewhere, and you shall send the scout and bed-maker on some errand, and we will get Turner into cover somewhere else.'

And so the matter was settled, and we went to supper.

Meanwhile Turner had remained perfectly quiet, as he was advised, in his garret. He had heard voices and people moving in the rooms below. At length all was still, and he heard the outer door shut. Then the old college clock slowly struck the hour of ten. And slowly and stealthily Tom Turner descended from his hiding-place.

The candles were lighted in the Doctor's sitting-room; the cloth was laid, and a hot supper was there all right, the covers on. Anxiety of mind, any mental exercise in fact, makes a man hungry, just as bodily exercise does. And Turner's appetite was ravenous. There was a basin of excellent soup—he quickly finished that; a pair of whittings also were disposed of; then, neglecting some trifling *entrées* as unworthy of notice, he went to work upon the *pièce de résistance* of the repast—a pair of boiled fowls. He was busy with them, taking occasionally a glass of Madeira or a long draught from the tankard of ale, when he was startled by hearing some one exclaim,

'Bless me, who is this? William, come here at once,' the speaker added.

It was not necessary for Turner to look up. At the first sound of the voice he knew that Dr. Turtle was in the room.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

'What are you, and how did you come here?' the Doctor asked in a stern voice.

Poor Turner's mouth was full, and he could not well answer; so he took another pull at the ale.

'Lord, who be that, sir?' exclaimed the scout, who had stopped aghast at the door. 'Blessed if he hain't eat nigh the whole of your dinner too. Why, that's the carter porter said as how Mr. Bulfinch brought into college yesterday, and none of 'em saw go out.'

'Man, who are you?' demanded the Doctor again, getting more astonished and indignant as he saw Turner drinking his ale in place of answering his question.

As soon as Turner could speak, however, he stood up and said, forgetting altogether his wig and unusual style of dress,

'I think it's pretty plain, Dr. Turtle, who I am; and if you will allow me I will explain how I come to be here.'

'And allow me to say,' interrupted the Doctor, 'that it's very far from plain to me who you are, and I insist on knowing your name at once.'

'Why, I am Turner of St. Boodle's, of course.'

'O, you are Turner, our freshman. Upon my word, sir, you have contrived to make yourself as unlike a University man—I was going to say a gentleman—as anything I ever saw. Well, and why are you here, Mr. Turner, and in that dress? And why have you eaten my dinner?'

'I will explain all to you in private if you will allow me,' Turner answered.

'William, go and see if you can get me something to eat,' said the Doctor. 'And now, Mr. Turner, let me hear your explanation. Is

this some bet, or practical joke, or what is it ?

' O sir,' said Turner, ' it's far worse than that. I have fought a duel, sir ; and, quite contrary to my intentions, I have killed my opponent.'

' Killed your opponent ? ' cried the Doctor astonished.

' Yes, sir ; I meant to fire in the air, but I shot him through the head.'

' And who was it ? ' asked the doctor.

' Tredennick of St. Audit's.'

' What ! Mr. Duke's friend ? Are you quite certain ?'

' Quite certain,' he answered.

' It is very strange, then,' said the Doctor, ' that Mr. Duke should have a supper-party in his rooms as he has to-night ; and I fancy I saw— O, there must be some mistake.'

' There can be no mistake about it,' said Turner. And he told the Doctor the whole story.

' I see,' he said, when he had heard it. ' And so you were in concealment in my room, and you thought that my dinner was intended for yourself. William,' he said to the scout, who then entered the room, ' just go to Mr. Duke's rooms and say that I wish to speak with him and Mr. Bulfinch for a few moments.'

When they appeared, Dr. Turtle said :

' I have just learned from Mr. Turner that he has killed Mr. Tredennick in a duel. Don't you think, Mr. Duke, it's rather unfeeling on your part to have a supper-party the day after your friend has been shot ?'

' Well—but, Dr. Turtle,' answered Duke with hesitation, ' this repast may be considered perhaps as having about it something of the nature of an Irish wake, if you know what that is.'

' O, indeed,' replied the Doctor.

' Unless my eyes deceived me as I crossed the court, it's rather the Egyptian custom you are following, and the corpse is present at the feast.'

' Ha, ha, ha ! By Jove, so it is ! ' exclaimed Bulfinch, who gave way to a fit of irrepressible and most unfeeling laughter.

' Come now, gentlemen,' said Dr. Turtle, ' this has gone quite far enough. I shall expect you, Mr. Bulfinch, and Mr. Duke to apologise to Mr. Turner, for I think you have given him good grounds for displeasure ; and, Mr. Turner, I must have your promise that while your name remains on the books of this college you will fight no more duels ; we have always been very friendly and harmonious here, and we really could not allow St. Boodle's to be made conspicuous in such a way.'

The three did of course as Dr. Turtle required ; and Turner, greatly relieved at learning that he had not shot Tredennick through the head, and that the whole thing was a practical joke, did not find it hard to forgive the perpetrators of it.

' There is no use in doing things by halves, old fellow,' said Duke to him as they left the tutor's rooms. ' You are not too angry, I hope, to come up and have some supper with us ; and you must be hungry still, I fancy, though you did have a pretty fair innings at old Turtle's dinner.'

' All right,' said Turner.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, having got rid of his disguise, he joined us at Duke's. Our host, pointing to a chair between himself and Fairchild, said,

' There's a place for you, Turner. I know you like to sit beside Miss Tredennick.'

Supper finished, Duke rose, saying, ' Fill your glasses, gentlemen. I shall on this occasion, with your permission, trans-

gress the rules of the Mutton-Chop Club, and propose a toast. I, with some others, have played off a practical joke upon a gentleman who is present—Mr. Turner. I must confess that we have been somewhat to blame; but let me say that throughout Turner has, in my opinion, acted admirably. If he was taken in, let me humbly say that was our merit, not his fault; though a joke with us, it was quite earnest with him, and he has behaved from first to last with pluck and good feeling; and best of all, gentlemen, he has at once and handsomely accepted our apologies. Mr. Turner's health, gentlemen. "For he's a jolly good fellow," &c.'

Turner, who really was a good fellow, and sensible at bottom, made a capital speech in returning thanks.

"I cannot," he said, "let Mr. Duke take all the blame upon himself. I talked like a fool the other evening about duelling, and I feel

that I have myself given occasion for what has happened; gentlemen, I knew nothing about the matter then, that's my only excuse. I have since found out what it is like to feel that you have deprived a fellow-creature of his life; and if, gentlemen, there are evils which the law cannot redress, better put up with them, I say now, than take a remedy that is worse than the disease. I have had a pretty sharp lesson, but I deserved it, and let me again assure Duke and his friends that I retain no angry feeling towards them in consequence."

Turner spoke very quietly, and evidently meant what he said, and his speech was enthusiastically received, and from that day until the end of an unusually prolonged college career, when to every one's surprise he took his bachelor's degree (in music, it must be confessed), Tom Turner was one of the most popular fellows both with dons and men in St. Boodle's.

ON THE STRAWS THAT TURN US.

I PROPOSE to say a few words on the subject of straws. Literally, the term may have some slight suggestiveness, but the suggestions vary. To the bucolic mind it means fodder for cattle; ladies think of the straw hats, the delicate fabrics of Luton and Dunstable; while to men it has an agreeable association as a simple, but most effective, mode of suction, whereby pleasant and cooling liquids are conveyed from the icy crystal into the thirsty larynx. The straws of which I speak are metaphysical rather than physical. The word metaphysics simply arose because Aristotle wrote a treatise which came directly after his Physics and was therefore entitled Meta-physics. It is a convenient word, however, to denote something which 'no fellow can be expected to understand.' There are a number of straws floating about which are in reality vital powers, and possess no inconsiderable influence over the human race. The poet says:

'An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man who's strangled by a hair.'

and sometimes a man may be more moved by a straw than he is by an earthquake. Therefore the social philosopher will not be indifferent to these social straws. The law of the land, indeed, professes not to care about straws—*De minimis non curat lex*; but he has not lived very long or very observantly in the world who has not found out that in a great many social matters the law is an ass. Justice may well be represented with scales upon her eyes.

As Archbishop Thomson explains the allegory, she has gone weeping blind.

Of course, in a properly balanced state of the human mind, it could not be in the power of mere straws to turn us, like so many weathercocks. But the most properly regulated mind is not evenly balanced at all times. There is a high-water mark and a low-water mark for most of us. I suppose this is what Mr. Matthew Arnold alludes to in his wise lines :

' And tasks in hours of insight willed,
In hours of gloom may be fulfilled.'

Who does not know a certain sickly, unfixed, irresolute state, when the vital forces are at the very lowest ebb? It happens most frequently, perhaps, in that hour preceding daylight in which most people die. At such a time a straw will turn us. It is a time of physical debility, which reacts upon the mental state. Unless you have a foregone conclusion to which you strongly cling, a straw will turn you. You had made up your mind for a climb, to see a mountain sunrise; and the straw of a suggestion occurs that to see a sunset would be equally fine and much more comfortable. You had made up your mind to do a stiff bit of work; but again that straw of suggestion whispers that you had better sleep upon it. It is only when you have so firmly grasped your suggestion that you act upon it with mechanical force and precision, that you are able to overcome that suffocating straw.

I was very much amused with what I saw of the action of men-

tal straws last night. Just as people may amuse themselves with watching straws in an eddy, so I watched straws floating about in the minds of sundry acquaintances. I was more or less amused because there was, in my own case, a straw flung backwards and forwards 'in what I am pleased to call my mind.' I had been for many days by that most delicious Italian lake, the Lago di Lugano. We had been staying many days. We ate figs and peaches, and reclined on couches in darkened rooms, and partook of harmless iced drinks, and bathed in the lake in the afternoon, and floated upon it in moonlight; and in the corridors and grove and gardens of the Hôtel du Parc we were well content to accept things as they went. But we were all well aware that things could not go on in this way for ever. But no one exactly knew when he would go; and except one or two, nobody seemed exactly aware where he was going to. Each man was at the mercy of an emerging straw. It was great fun to watch how the straws emerged. One man thought he would start very early next morning, because the morning hours were cool. Then another thought that he would avoid hurry if he went leisurely through the morning and started after lunch. Then Jones, a popular man, was going on to Venice; and Smith, who liked Jones, thought that he might as well go to Venice too. I was undetermined about the lakes; but because the Queen had been at Baveno I thought, as a loyal subject, that I should like to see the Villa Clara. You will find, my friends, that such straws as these often determine our acts and movements. You are conscious that an act of volition has been accomplished; yet so slight has been the volition,

that you can hardly explain what has been the particular straw which has determined it. And yet these turnings of straws may be real turning-points in life. You cross over the street at a certain point, the straw is that the road then happens to be free for half a minute; and on the other side of the street you greet a friend whom you have not seen for a dozen years, and that friend has something to tell you which you have longed to know for years. You hesitated for some time whether you would accept that invitation to picnic or dance, Master Henry, or stop at the club; but you decided on the party, and you sealed your fate. A man was going to Australia by the London; but the friend who was with him took it into his head that the ship looked like a long coffin, and this straw of a fancy determined him not to go, and so saved his life. Such is very much the ordinary state of things. The noiseless Fates steal by us shod with their velvety shoon, and we are sometimes wrecked upon trifles; just as the story goes that people may be done to death by the tickling of straws on the soles of the feet.

I look upon a straw with feelings of the deepest veneration. When I hear a person say, 'I don't care a straw about *him*, or about *her*', it seems to me that perhaps the quoted straw may indicate a great deal of care and anxious thought. For consider what may be the results and uses of a veriest straw. A steed may have stumbled at a straw, and have caused the fall or the death of its rider. The children of Israel went out of Egypt on that question of having straw to mix with their bricks. When Galileo lay in his dungeon, the inquisitors charged him with atheism. He

is said to have taken up a straw, and to have told them that from that straw he could vindicate the existence of Deity. It is not too much to say that the argument of design may be wrapped up in a straw. It was, perhaps, through notches in a straw that some of the elemental musical ideas took their rise. We remember Mrs. Browning's great god Pan singing through his reed. It is impossible for a right-thinking man to speak irreverently of a straw. Such a man is just the kind of person, as Sydney Smith wittily said, to speak disrespectfully of the Equator. We can never properly decide what is great or what is little. Often enough what we call little is really greater than what we call great. It may be the mere turning of a straw, to use our phrase, that leads to the discovery of some physical facts of the highest importance. I am reminded of that fine saying of St. Augustine's, *Deus magnus in magnis, maximus in minimis*. We are told that it is not 'in man that walketh to direct his steps.' No, a straw may intervene and alter the direction of his path. And then there are those saddest of all straws, the straws which drowning men proverbially catch at.

There is a curious tendency in the human mind to decide the most important points hastily, and to reserve unimportant matters for mature deliberation. A man will often propose to a woman in a moment of excitement, and purchase a horse after prolonged inspection and inquiry. Those who thus marry in haste may spend a long life in leisurely repenting. It is as well for the happiness of the human family that this kind of thing does not invariably happen. Still there is many a matter, both im-

portant and unimportant, on which the pros and cons seem exactly balanced, and something like a ratio of equality seems established. It is in such even matters as these that we encounter the straws that turn us. We are poised in a wavering position, and the slightest impulse determines our direction. A man becomes a sort of logan stone, which may easily topple over. There are all sorts of stories respecting the way in which men have settled the most important matters by a hair's line of difference. The thoughtless many may settle a matter by the simple process of tossing up. Those who think, or at least think that they think, will allow themselves to be guided by the turning of a straw. Take that matter of marriage of which I spoke just now. The lamented Whyte-Melville, in one of his capital stories, makes one of his men ask one of his ladies whether she could sow on buttons. In the opinion of very many sensible people, to sow on buttons is the great mission of women in this life. It was the uncouth fellow's allegorical way of asking her to marry him. She really liked him very much; but being a literal person she replied literally that she did not in the least care for the sewing on of buttons. So that particular straw settled conclusively that particular question. Then I knew a man who was very much *épris* with an arch pretty girl. But her girlish wit somewhat lacked discretion. She made much fun of 'his sisters, his cousins, and his aunts.' He did not like to introduce what might be an antagonistic element into the family, and that little conversational straw settled the matter. In the same way, a girl was almost engaged to a very horsey man, whose legs showed a tendency to curvature on account of his constant

riding. Amans found a sketch made by Amanda, in which this little weakness was only too faithfully preserved. The result was an eternal separation. Similarly, I have known cases of a broken engagement, simply in consequence of a broken appointment. A man has missed a train, or could not find a cab, and has endured the consequences of perjury and reprobation. It used to be a hack device of some novelist to state or invent such an incident as bringing the hero home soon after the heroine had married the wrong man under an utter misconception. He generally came three minutes and a half after the priest had fastened the knot. There are many variations of that legend of Auld Robin Gray. That straw of unpunctuality has given an awkward turn to very many people. The other day I heard of a man who had fixed his mind steadily on the purchase of a certain house and grounds. He missed his train by two minutes. When he came to town, the sale was over by about two minutes. A friend had just become the purchaser. He explained the circumstances to his friend, and hoped that he would transfer the transaction to him, and he would be happy to pay a fine of fifty pounds. But the friend knew the point of advantage, and meant to keep it. He knew that his friend would practically be obliged to buy, and he calmly demanded one thousand pounds for his bargain. There was no alternative, for his wife had set her heart upon the place, and that costly straw of unpunctuality stood at a thousand pounds to him. But this sort of momentous straws are always flying about. A straw shows how the wind blows. A man who possesses that most important piece of information, how the

wind blows, may often make a very good thing out of that bit of knowledge. It has been said of some great statesman and some great warriors, that they prospered or not in policy and war just as they were free from the gout, or had been seized by a vindictive twinge of it. One or two of the greatest events that have happened in the history of the world have been determined by this matter of the gout. And the attack or non-attack of the gout may have been determined by the simple fact that the great man may have partaken of some fruit that was unwholesome, or some wine that was subacid. It is a matter of some surprise and humiliation that many great events of national and individual history are settled, not by council, not by deliberation, not by adroit calculation, but by the turning of straws.

Constantly in books and in society we recognise the turning up of that mystical straw. The other day I took up a Mr. Grunden's *Recollections of the Past*. It seems that he went out at a few days' notice to Australia. He did it rather as a lark. There was something to be done in the way of engineering. But Mr. Grunden does not seem ever to have come home again. The other day I was talking to the chaplain of an English colony established in a continental watering-place. He had crossed the Channel on a careless summer holiday, and had come to this romantic forest spa. He thought he should stay there ten days. As a matter of fact he had lived there for ten years. He had not been over to England for years. All his friendships and all his ties were no longer in England, but upon the Continent.

But there is one particular straw of a somewhat tragic and unhappy

kind which I must next take up. This is that Last Straw which breaks the camel's back. I have always had a great deal of sympathy for that most unfortunate and ill-used camel. Many a time and oft he had borne that most grievous burden of the piled-up heaps of straw. He had borne to the last point of endurance. Then they laid on a single straw more. The unhappy camel, after all his journeys over the hot desert, broke down most completely at that single but most final straw. The last moment concludes the cycle of the day. The last drop makes the cup overflow. The last straw breaks the camel's back. Which things are an allegory. Now let me point out one or two ways in which the last straw may be seen to break the camel's back. My first illustration shall be one of a most alarming character. It is an illustration drawn from the annals of secret poisoning. I am almost reluctant to mention these facts; but, in the first place, they are notorious; in the next place, modern science can baffle, or at least take its revenge on, the murderer; and, in the third place, it is possible that my words may convey a useful warning. My illustration is drawn from the use of the hydrate of chloral. I am glad to see that there has been a medical committee which has lately reported in warning terms respecting the use of this drug, which ten years ago set all the profession wild, and was supposed to be a therapeutic in every case. I will state the matter this way, not with accuracy, but with an approximation thereto. It is the nature of some poisons that the human system becomes tolerant of them. The more you take, the more you may take. This is the case with opium, and even with arsenic. There is an Austrian mine in which the

people accustom themselves to take quite big lumps of arsenic. It is quite the converse case in the matter of chloral hydrate. We will say that the human system can tolerate only a hundred and fifty grains, if, indeed, so much. But chloral hydrate is a substance which is very slowly eliminated from the system. It accumulates, and after a certain point the accumulation is fatal. Thus, suppose a man takes a dose of thirty grains. At the end of the first twenty-four hours he has not disengaged the entire dose. We will say that ten grains remain in the system; consequently, if he takes another similar dose, he has now really got forty grains instead of the thirty. In this way matters progress on a *crescendo* scale. It is obvious that a point is reached in which the body contains as much of the medicine as it can possibly bear. Now just go a point beyond this. Take another dose when the complement of possible doses is complete. It is the last straw on the camel's back. The camel breaks down. Of course this is only a rough illustration from the lay point of view, for doses and systems differ all round, but still it is an instance of that fatal last straw.

We might take further illustrations of the last straw. What is that 'drop too much' but just the straw too much? If the human camel is exceedingly thirsty, and cannot, like the camel, arrange to carry a cool cellar with him, there is a fatal possibility of his breaking down in the long-run. Nature is exceedingly tolerant, but only up to a certain point. She will stand any reasonable load, but she objects violently to that extra straw. Nature is a most pitiless, accurate, almost mathematical state of things. She keeps an unfailing register against all our little mis-

takes ; in the long-run, she adds them all up and presents her little total. If we impose on her that supererogatory straw, she is apt to demand a quick balance and to close the account. We speak of 'Madre Natura,' but she is quite capable of being a stepmother as well as a mother. If we run our heads against those laws of hers, we receive bumps which may well puzzle all the phrenologists. 'Natur,' said Mr. Squeers, with greater truth than that philosopher himself divined, 'Natur' is a rum un. O, what a blessed thing it is to be in a state of natur' ! His view is at least sounder than Rousseau's.

Let me pursue the medical illustration just a little further. Medical men sometimes say that acute diseases are chronic. By which they mean that the acute form is only the outcome of a long train of antecedents. You have disobeyed the first law of all medical science, which is *to keep well*. Symptoms have been neglected ; they have accumulated, have been intensified, have come to a crisis. It is a state of things which often occurs both morally and physically. Then comes the inevitable break-up. I met a man some time ago who used to travel in business, and almost passed his life upon the rail. He came home one evening, and walking across his dining-room he staggered like a drunken man. Uncharitable people, who did not know his habits, might have thought him intoxicated. He sank on his chair, and he was a prisoner in his chair all the rest of his life. He was completely paralysed in his lower limbs. The incessant travelling on the rail had at last proved too much for his nervous system. Hence the collapse ; and I have a strong impression that other collapses might be traced to a similar source. I knew of a lawyer

who was in a great rush of business. He liked his fees ; but like all men who succeed, he liked business thoroughly for its own sake. He was unable to refuse business ; and, indeed, to refuse business is the hardest trial which can happen to any professional man. His mistake was, that he did not provide himself with adequate assistance. The ill-treated brain took to softening, and then all business came to an end. I knew of a man who was enormously wealthy. In addition to the constant employment which his own vast property gave him, he was trustee for ever so many widows, orphans, and charities. He worked hard at accounts till the small hours in the morning. A boy-clerk, at fifteen shillings a week, might have done it all for him. But he preferred 'doing his own work himself,' and accordingly he had to quit this inferior existence where such a condition of things is not always possible. One of the best-known men in the country once told me that he was going to take a six weeks' holiday at the seaside. I was rejoiced to hear it. No man better deserved or more required such a holiday. Then he told me that he was going to take his new book with him to the seaside, and hoped to have it ready for publication by the time his holiday was over. I expostulated with him. I explained that he was only exchanging one kind of hard work for a still harder kind of hard work. But he took the advice of what is often a man's worst counsellor, himself. His book was successful ; but he never knew of the success. In each case it was the same—the last straw, the last straw, the last straw ! Nature speaks to us in a gentle whisper and subdued hint ; but if we will not listen,

she utters her edict with a voice of thunder, and perhaps strikes the offender down with her thunderbolt.

My readers will hardly fancy where I am writing these present lines. I am on a little plateau overhanging the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen. Just below me there is a sort of opera-box projecting over the raving abyss of water. The sun has been gleaming on the vine-clad banks and the dark-green river; but when you come into these galleries you put on your overcoat and put up your umbrella as if you were going into a stormy night. I do not at all mind that splash of cold water which Father Rhine has thrown into my face, paying me the personal attention of leaving his card. How lovely is that cloud of tinted spray above the resounding rocks! And against the opposite bank there is evermore a veil of thinnest gauze, one of Nature's brideveils, woven of air and spray. Southey's lines on a waterfall, hardly applicable to Lodore—although I know and have climbed Lodore, and wish to speak of it with respect—find here their fullest realisation. But this thought occurred to me, as I leaned on the frail barrier which separated me from the seething caldron of waters, and which I could in a moment surmount—that it is

only the nature of a straw which so often makes the barrier between life and death. Many people are often looking out with agonised alarm at that last straw which is to come, and break them up. They are living at an extreme state of tension, and they know that it cannot last. But it is just at this point that the incomparable value of the Christian revelation comes in. That revelation tells us that we shall never be tried beyond what we are able to bear. It tells us that with the danger and the burden there shall be a way of escape that we may be able to bear it. It plants against the span of the mighty waters, the rainbow of unalterable and immortal hope. We are told, in the picturesque Hebrew phrase, that the floods of great waters shall not come nigh us. Our feet are planted in safety upon a rock. Our instinctive horror of death and annihilation, despite pessimism, receive the fullest sympathy and answer:

“Tis life of which our nerves are scant—
Life and more life is what I want,¹

says our great modern poet. And there is One who, knowing exactly the structure of the human soul, has met this yearning: ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’

SHOOTING WILD-BOARS BY MOONLIGHT IN ALSACE.

I HAVE rarely been 'mixed up' with anything more entertaining. Several wild-boars had, the previous night, devastated part of a wheat-field near the border of the wood; and as the 'black beasts' who had done the mischief had not then been disturbed, there was every likelihood that they would come again to complete the damage. We, accordingly, were preparing ourselves for a night expedition against the marauders.

'By the way,' said my host, 'you know that night-shooting is forbidden here?'

'No, I did not know that,' I replied with some dismay.

'Well,' he said, 'if we were caught at it by the gendarmes or by the garde champêtre or forestier, why, we should be severely fined, and our guns would be confiscated.'

'Really?' I exclaimed ruefully. Then a happy thought struck me. 'Could not you get the officials out of the way, somehow?' I asked.

'Not very well,' he rejoined, laughing. 'The garde champêtre is all right, though. The farmer and myself have "squared" him. He has gone to see his great aunt, who is ill somewhere ten miles from here.' This with a wink.

At this piece of news I expressed a very lively satisfaction; for of course this communal guard was the party to be most likely to find us out, as he might have been out just that evening and heard our shots.

'As for the gendarmes,' pursued my worthy friend, 'we must take our chance of them; but I

don't think we should have much to fear from that quarter. They may, or may not, go for a round to-night; but the odds are great that they should not just come to that quarter of all others. They would of course do so if they had received a hint from any informer; but nobody knows what is going to take place, except the farmer, Fritz, and our two selves. Now, it is the farmer's interest that we should rid him of the *sangliers*; in fact, he came himself to tell me about them, and ask me to come round this evening; so he is not likely to tell, especially as he will join us in the fun. As for Fritz, he knows better than to go "blabbing" about, and provided we don't ourselves mention the matter, I don't see how it is to be known at headquarters at any time.'

'Neither do I,' said I, much relieved.

'Nevertheless,' pursued my companion, 'we must be prepared for anything. Should any one turn up after our shots (if we are lucky enough to have to fire), remain quite still until whoever is about has gone his way. That is the safest plan, because even if it were only a peasant going in the early morning about his work, he would be sure to tell whatever he knew of the affair as a matter of course.'

'All right,' I said, 'I shall remain still until you come to me if we are separated.'

'That we shall be,' he explained; 'for there is no knowing which way the boars will come. Therefore the four of us (for Fritz is

coming too ; he is an excellent shot at all times) will have to watch at different spots around the field.'

'And you are sure the boars will come?' queried I.

'O, certainly, if no one interferes with them on their way. When once they have come to a crop and find that no disturbance occurs there, they always come to it again, until pretty nearly the whole crop is gone.'

'Very pleasant this for the farmers,' I interposed then.

'Very,' he rejoined drily. 'That is why my old friend came to tell me so quickly about it. Of course if we shoot any of the "beasts" he will have his share of the meat. That will be some compensation for his losses.'

Just then Fritz turned up with some fresh bullets he had been casting for his old smooth-bore carbine. He wrapped up each bullet in a piece of calico until it had to be forced down somewhat to enter the barrel of his gun, and when he had prepared three or four of these missiles, he declared himself satisfied.

'Not that I shall be likely to want *three* bullets to-night,' he explained to me. 'When once a shot has been fired the boars make themselves scarce without delay, but I might want another shot or two in the morning.'

At ten o'clock we drove away, and half an hour's drive brought us to the farmhouse, where we found a glorious supper awaiting us.

At about half-past eleven P.M., Fritz, who had been out loitering about, came in to say that the moon was shining brilliantly.

'I think,' added he, 'that we ought to start, sir ; the boars cannot be long coming now.'

We instantly prepared ourselves ; Fritz loaded carefully his

muzzle-loading implement, and we made a start. We had agreed that not a shot should be fired by either of us, unless we were pretty sure of bringing a 'beast' down.

'You understand,' explained my friend to me. 'Don't try any long shot, or random shot. It would only spoil the fun. If you get a boar within twenty yards, well and good, fire away. If they keep further away, keep quite still, for they are wonderfully suspicious—at the slightest noise they are off like cannon-balls, literally frantic with terror, and our chance then would be irretrievably gone.'

'O, but,' I said, 'twenty yards is rather a short distance, is it not?'

'Not by moonlight,' he insisted. 'It is not easy, by any means, to place a bullet so as to stop a boar neatly when firing at night. And, as you know, if the boar is not killed on the spot, we are sure to lose him, since we cannot boldly follow in pursuit.'

'I see. All right,' I said ; and as we turned round the farm wall silence was strictly enjoined. We walked on thus, across the orchard, through a pasture, along two or three turnip-fields, some clover, and finally, there, before us, stood the wheat-field, gently undulating, like a peaceful sea, under the night breeze. The moon was at its full, and not a cloud was in the sky, so that the light was so strong that I certainly could have read a newspaper on the spot. I could see for hundreds of yards around me, almost as well as in day-time. When we reached the field :

'Now, sir,' said the old farmer in a hushed voice to me, 'if you will walk on quietly until you come to the corner yonder, where the willow-tree stands by the brook, you will find it a capital station, and well under the wind.'

'I think,' said my friend to

Fritz, 'that you had better stand there too. The farmer and I will take the other corner.'

We accordingly separated.

The willow-tree stood on a pretty high bank, and getting behind that fence, we sat on the grass, Fritz and I, and began to look about us.

The brook ran murmuring by our side, the leaves of the old tree rustled, some quails were calling in the distance, but beyond these faint notes all around us was peaceful and silent. The wheat-field, at the corner of which we stood, was a very large one, coming tongue-shaped in our direction; the distance along the side was fully two hundred and fifty yards, and at the opposite corner, by the brook, my friend and the old farmer, we presumed, were ensconced. Of course we could not talk, and did not attempt to do so, and there we sat for two mortal hours without daring so much as to wink. I began to feel very chilly, dull, and sleepy. We had not heard a single noise which we could attribute to the customers whose coming we were so hopefully awaiting; and I began to suspect that they would not come that night. However, I took a drink, and handed the flask silently to Fritz. This worthy, however, to my astonishment, did not take it. I looked at him then, and found him with his head stiffly inclined towards the wheat-field, and he was intently holding up his hand to me.

I listened, but could not hear anything. That, however, the keeper's practised ears had detected something unusual was soon made pretty evident, for whilst I was still wondering what he was listening at, a grunt, or rather half a dozen quick sharp grunts, broke the stillness of the night, and presently we heard the boars having a tussle and fighting among

themselves, but they were as yet invisible to us, they being right amidst the standing crop.

I, of course, placed the flask on the ground at once, and quietly picked up my double-barrelled rifle. Fritz, on his right knee by my side, quite hidden, all but his head, by the bank, had silently cocked his carbine, and held it almost to his shoulder, ready for a shot at the shortest of notice.

Presently we heard, 'Grunt, grunt!' from a boar.

'Grunt, grunt!' replied another.

'Grunt, grunt, grunt, grunt!' said then two or three more.

Then there was silence. Evidently they were asking if everything was all right. After a minute or so, a noise arose in the crop, as if several men had been tearing the wheat by handfuls, and the unmistakable munching of the pigs began noisily.

Suddenly they stopped feeding, and one of the youngest of the lot (judging from his voice) shrieked out in a frightened tone, 'Grunt!'

'Grunt!' the others seemed to query in a breath, in great alarm; and, without waiting for an answer, helter-skelter, pell-mell, away rushed the whole lot, five of them, out of the wheat into the open.

They broke from the field at full speed about fifty yards from us. We had crouched behind the fence so as not to be seen by them, and away the 'beasts' tore, like mad beings, for about a hundred yards, when they slackened speed, and finally stopped, turning round at last to look back.

'Grunt, grunt, grunt!' remarked one of the biggest, as though to say, 'what is the row about?'

'Grunt, grunt, grunt, don't know, I am sure,' seemed to reply each of the others.

'Then grunt, grunt, what the

deuce did we run away for?' queried the lot in a chorus.

'Grunt, grunt; so-and-so gave the alarm,' suggested perhaps one of them.

Whilst all this consultation was going on, the boars stood facing the suspicious wheat-field, and with their heads high up in the air, they were audibly sniffing the breeze, and trying to scent the danger, if any. One or two of them seemed inclined to go altogether. Evidently their minds were not quite at rest on the point, and they feared all sorts of dangerous things, no doubt.

The leader, however, a bolder sort of 'beast,' perhaps being very hungry, did not see the fun of running away from a good meal without any more tangible proof that it was not safe to indulge in it than the mere vagaries of a timid companion; so, with a determined series of portentous grunts, he came back, step by step, slowly and carefully moving his head right and left, pretty much like a pointer, winding with great caution.

When he had gone about twenty yards from the others, the latter evidently thought they were awful cowards to remain behind, so they followed suit, and thus they all came back without order; but all carefully looking and smelling about, until they were within fifty yards of us, when they came to a full stop again.

At that manœuvre, under the shelter of the bank, I looked at Fritz, and pointed to my rifle barrels in mute pantomime, as though asking 'Shall I fire?'

Fritz seemed undecided. Of course it looked likely that the boars, somehow, would come no further. Although the breeze blew from them to us, yet who knew but that the scent of our persons might have tainted theair,

and they could, somehow, make it out, not quite distinctly, perhaps, but yet sufficiently so to prevent them from returning to their feed? They might go at any moment, I thought, therefore no time was to be lost on our part. True, the distance was a little more than that prescribed beforehand by my friend; but in spite of the deceptive glare of the moon, I could see the boars so plainly that I was certain I could hit one whilst they were standing still, at any rate. So after a second glance at Fritz who evidently did not want to take the responsibility of the shots, seeing that he was still doubtfully shaking his head (of course he thought I could not kill outright a boar at fifty or sixty yards range under the circumstances) I made up my mind to demonstrate, not only the possibility, but the very likely probability of success. So without more ado, I quietly slipped the rifle barrels on the top of the bank between two thistle roots; I slowly brought up my eye on a level with the tubes, squinted along them at the biggest boar's shoulder, and crack! sped the bullet, so true that the boar collapsed there and then.

The effect of the shot on the others, however, was tremendous. Astounded beyond measure, they uttered a sharp cry of affright, lowered their heads, and dashed across the strip of wheat in front of them, fairly bewildered by the explosion. They were through the crop in a moment, and charged the little brook. Fritz fired at the last, and hit him so cleverly that the brute failed in his stride to clear the brook, and fell in it. He was, however, up again in a twinkling, and was climbing the opposite bank, when I ran up to him, deliberately fired at his neck near the shoulder-

blades, and he rolled again in the water, but quite dead that time.

The others were flying along at full speed, on the little path that ran by the brook, and at a glance I caught the prospective scene. Two shadows (my friend and the farmer) had run to the brook from their posts, and were awaiting there the passage of the three boars.

Crack! crack! bang! exploded my friend's rifle and the old farmer's fowling-piece, and I saw them both run to a dark body, still crawling on the path. A wounded boar. Another crack of the breech-loader, and silence again reigns supreme.

We then rejoin them, and find them slinging their boar by the heels. They had only shot that one, and no wonder, considering the speed the boars were going at when they passed them. I should have missed them clean, I know, under the circumstances.

'Did you kill one, too?' asked my host.

'We have killed two, sir,' said Fritz, and he related the whole affair.

'Ah, well, all is well that ends well,' said the farmer, who was, I may state, in the highest state of jubilation. 'Let us go back to the farm. If we are to get the boars removed before daybreak, there is no time to be lost.'

Neither was there, for a pale tint was already invading the heavens in the east, and ere long Master Phebus with the golden locks would make his appearance over the horizon.

Of course my friend Fritz and I went to bed forthwith, and when we got up for breakfast, at about ten, we had a *hure de sanglier au vin blanc*, as *pièce de résistance*.

'It is quite fresh, I assure you,' said the farmer, with a broad grin, to me; 'allow me to help you to two or three slices. In fact, I believe you have seen this gentleman, face to face, before.'

At this we roared again. Ah me! what a jolly time that was, to be sure. To crown it all, as we were driving home about noon we fell in with two of the mounted gendarmes.

'Good-morning, gentlemen.'

'Good-morning,' replied my host, who knew them well; 'any news?'

'No; nothing of importance, sir. Someone told us that some poachers have been heard potting a wild boar last night. We shall have to look out for these gentry one of these fine evenings.'

'Ay, that you ought,' replied my friend, with the utmost composure, 'these *braconniers* have the very *diabolique* in their bodies, to go watching about all night, like that; have not they, now?'

'You are right, sir, quite right. But we will pounce on them yet.'

'Ah! Hope you will. Good-morning. Come round for a glass or two of wine by and by?'

'All right, sir, thank you, so we will, much obliged. Good-morning, gentlemen.'

And away we went.

As good as a play it was. I thought I should have had a fit. The worthy officers little guessed that the actual delinquents had *de facto* been before them.

This gave quite a zest to our adventure. Had they, however, looked into the body of the dog-cart, two *bêtes noires*, therein stretched side by side, would, methinks, have made them open their eyes.

WILDFOWLER.

REFLECTIONS AT BRIGHTON.

WHILE waiting listlessly for lunch
And noting some promiscuous figures—
A bishop, an itinerant Punch,
A four-in-hand, a troupe of niggers—
There rises from the noisy street
A spell to summon buried fancies.
Though hackneyed now, I thought it sweet,
When, to its strains with flying feet,
I sought a maiden's eyes, to meet
What cynics might have called sheep's glances.

That valse again ! There was a time
I thought it only ours to know it ;
I found its meaning quite sublime,
And felt not then ashamed to show it.
Again I stand on polished floor,
A verdant youth with heart of tinder,
Yet striving to find life a bore—
A vision glorifies the door—
A sub., but unattached no more,
I'm thine for ever, Lady Linda !

O strength of youthful faith ! Nor schemes,
Nor threats, nor separation stopped it ;
Bright bloomed our love, like summer dreams,
Six months—and then we somehow dropped it.
And, lo, that music speaks again,
With all its mastery of passion ;
A first love still, and all in vain
We try to love a newer strain,
As if the soul of joy and pain
Could change with ever-changing fashion.

Ah me ! it made my heart beat loud
And fast for nearly half a minute ;
While not an hour ago I bowed
To Lady Linda in the crowd ;
And with clear conscience I had vowed
My heart had no soft fibre in it.

But as once more that valse I hear,
Albeit from a barrel-organ,
A form in gauzy clouds is near ;
Soft nothings charm a little ear,
And once again we own the fear
Of mother stern as any Gorgon.

But time has passed, and I have found
Life not at all as I designed it :
That 'neath the flowers is common ground,
That dancing is but turning round,
While catgut makes the heavenly sound,
And, Heavens, I don't mind it !

